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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

BEING PERSONAL:
EMERGING PATTERNS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATING

by

ARTHUR BRUCE RIDGEWAY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
SPRING, 1988

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled BEING PERSONAL: EMERGING PATTERNS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATING submitted by ARTHUR BRUCE RIDGEWAY in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

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ABSTRACT

This is a phenomenological investigation into the processes of being personal when relating with others. As there is at present no preliminary map of this field of study, this research provides a beginning. In narrowing the breadth of this research, the present researcher was particularly interested in exploring this topic with people who, like himself, were motivated in the direction of seeking personal growth and self-knowledge.

Eight volunteers from a group of eighteen participants in a one month residential program for personal and professional development agreed to engage with the researcher in conversation, in journal writing and in group discussions to provide data for this study. These encounters yielded descriptive data from which themes and patterns emerged. The themes and patterns were then examined in terms of an underlying psychological structure.

Phenomenological methods outlined by Giorgi, Colaizzi, Alapack and Polkinghorne were used to analyze the data. Two protocols, selected for their rich descriptive detail are presented in the body of this thesis. Significant excepts from the remaining six protocols were integrated into the procedures which have been placed in the appendicies.

Processes of being personal, as described in this study, are characterized by the intention to learn and understand and by the tendency to move toward others. Additionally, the experience of personal relating includes underlying intentions and tendencies which inhibit or reduce the quality of contact with others. The results indicate that relating with others elicits personal patterns which bring us closer or move us more distant from others. The data reveals also, that fears related to exposure, abandonment, rejection, angry attacks, loss of control and being engulfed by the other, all influence the processes of being personal when relating with others. The experience of being personal is discussed in terms of both the enabling and restaining structures which have emerged from the research data. The study concludes with a phenomenological description of being personal which represents the essential structures which provide a foundation for developing personal relationships.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Approaching the Question of Being Personal

Chapter one begins by inviting the reader to engage with the writer in exploring the nature of personal relating. This invitation through writing creates the possibility of a connection between the person reading and the person who is writing. It is this connection, a relationship between two people which is suspended in midair, the "something" which is caught and for a moment held which delimits the essential focus of this study. This study focuses on the processes of connecting with self and others as a way of understanding the lived-experience of being personal.

The first three sections of this chapter are organized to describe and clarify the nature of being personal and to provide a background for stating of the research question. The reader may consider his/her interaction with what is written as an opportunity to reflect on various ideas, images and associations held about being personal. The writer's lived-experience of meeting an old friend provides an opportunity to begin our examination of the experience of being personal:

> I feel excitment and anticipation building as people continue to arrive; coming together, a celebration of union and of friendship. Sitting on the veranda, feeling the warmth of the sun on this beautiful old

union and of friendship. Sitting on the veranda, feeling the warmth of the sun on this beautiful old stone home, I can almost reach out and touch the air, filled with moisture and softened by fall afternoon light. I glance past the garden along the driveway to see more people approaching, carrying food and gifts for the festivities. The large man in the blue-grey suit, walking with wife and daughters, looks up to see me looking at him. I feel a smile register on my face and see it being reflected on his. I move towards him as he comes up the steps; the others recede from focus as if to become observers. My hand reaches out to grasp his and the sound of words of greeting can be heard passing from my lips. Our hands touch, his enveloping mine with a firm yet yeilding grip; heat and moisture warm my chilled hand. I see a gentleness in his weathered eyes and face that seem to belie his stature. His other arm reaches around my shoulder to embrace as I feel his breathe on my face. The smell of smoke and liquor fill my nostrils as I am dwarfed in this bear's hug. "How wonderful to see you again my friend", are the words said yet not spoken. I tighten my grip on his hand as we are suspended in time, caught and for a moment held. We step back smiling, look at each other and begin walking toward

> the door, his arm resting on my shoulder. Words begin to flow about this, that and the other. As we enter the crowded interior, our moment of sharing begins to ebb, neutralized by the overstimulation of the party ambience. We part company taking with us a renewed sense of our shared bond.

The reader understands this description as he/she creates images and associations that add dimension to what is said. As the story unfolds, the reader enters the lived-experience, becoming a part of it, by visually imagining the set and setting. The meaning is somehow not present just in the words. Perhaps it is the reader's ability to stop and look back reflectively on what he/she has just experienced that gives this story its psychological life. The reader's subjective experience, his/her self-referencing gives this story its meaning. The reader becomes a participant, creating meaning by virtue of a common humanity shared with the writer. It is the essential commonality of human experience expressed through language that makes understanding between writer and reader possible.

The reader's interpretations of this passage may also be influenced by his/her particular historical and perceptual context. As the reader, one may not be cognizent of the implicit manner in which he/she makes sense of the above protocol. However, as a psychologist, the implicit structures which orient a person towards this lived-experience may in large part determine what he/she is interpreting and how he/she is understanding this description.

If the reader is interested in "why" the writer is telling this story, he/she might examine the cause, reason or motive - the grounds for presenting this experience. The investigation would focus on the past, seeking analytical explanations for the present behavior. Depending on his/her theoretical frame, one might review childhood, parental relations or recent dreams to assist in giving meaning to what is being expressed.

If one's curiosity is "what", what is the meaning of this story, then the reader might focus more on clarifying and understanding the content of the experience. Empathy might exemplify this particualr style of approach, yet often this preoccupation with content trenscends any theoretical orientation in favour of personal preoccupation with details.

If the reader investigates the question "how", he/she might focus on the process, the manner in which the experience is lived by the writer. An existentialist might be curious about how this experience relates to issues of aloneness and isolation, love and intimacy or meaning and individual identity.

The reader may find him/herself involved in thinking about what he/she has just read and how he/she has oriented his/herself towards the protocol experience. As associations and memories unfold, the reader's refections can shift to a questioning of what in this passage pertains specifically to his/her experience of being in contact with another person. The reader might begin to wonder: "What is my experience in response to what is written?" "What makes this experience meaningful for me?" "Is the author speaking to me?" "Is the author being personal with me?" "What does it mean to be personal with another person?"

These questions can begin to orient the reader to the nature of the present research on being personal. The approach to this study assumes that the answers to the questions raised lie within one's lived-experience. Reflecting on what is there and questioning what it tells us about being personal then become the tools for making sense out of what is emerging. This is accomplished through increasing sensitivity and awareness of our experiencing, describing our experiences and discovering the emerging patterns.

As the reader continues to delve into this study, he/she may have any number of questions emerge about the experience of being personal. And the reader really won't know what many of those questions are until they are half answered. Sometimes answers seem to be one thing and turn out to be another and so the questioning spiral continues.

> Why is it so much fun to toss a ball, a beanbag, a breakfast roll, or a Frisbee...or to catch one tossed to you? Playing catch must be one of the dullest activities two people can share, yet it is always curiously satisfying. The exercise of skill is part of it. But surely it has to do with connection, with a relationship suspended in midair until something is caught and for a moment held. (Unknown)

B. What Is Meant by "Being Personal"

The present study began with a question directed toward the lived-experience, "What is it like to be personal with someone?" The question is not "What is being personal?" but rather "What is it like to be in the experience of being personal?" Being personal is the living process of relating not a objectified, nominalized thing or event. The question therefore attempts to elicit a reliving of past experiences, or an awareness of the immediate lived-experience of being personal. The aim is to understand the ongoing dynamic processes of human relating.

As used in this paper, being personal refers to a human experience that is characterized by a particular orientation or chosen way of being in the world. In common language we speak of personal people as being "open", "receptive", "sharing", "vulnerable", "empathic", while others are described as being "closed", "unresponsive", "cold", "defensive", "distant" etc. All these terms imply in varying degrees, a quality of being personal. It may be useful to view the process being personal as encompassing a range of human relating from distant/impersonal/superficial to close/personal/intimate. Being personal is a qualitative aspect of the lived experience which can be described as a process or pattern.

Implied in the term being personal is the notion of relating. We cannot say that we are being personal without implying our relatedness to someone. Being personal is an action, an intention, a tendency towards openly relating with another person. Being personal is immediate temporal contact where we are present to each other in the unfolding process of an interchange. Being personal is an attitude of acceptance of what is occuring and a willingness to share one's experience of the life-world. We accept what is by acknowledging our present lived-experience and sharing it with another. Being personal is a way of being in the world (an orientation, an attitude, a manner) that brings us into closer contact with ourselves and others. Being personal is allowing space for our individual meanings to emerge from our contact with each other.

The question "What is it like to be personal with another?" reflects a genuine desire to know and to understand. Our question does not seek explanation or causal clarification but rather a description and understanding of the lived-experience. The nature of personal relating, what it is, how it is experienced, and what stops one from being personal are central questions in this study.

C. Towards Being Personal

Being personal is something we have all experienced, yet being personal isn't easy. There are countless mechanisms in our lives that plead for safety, conformity and sameness. The introjected filters adopted through the course of our personal history at times prevent us from becoming individuated and autonomous. Being personal can be viewed a being on the other end of the continuum from alientation. Being personal is characterized by personal closeness, authenticity and intimacy while alientation is distinguished by personal distance created by roles, rules and the dynamics of power and control.

"Don't take it personally" we say to others, as we infer that they should not respond authentically with human emotion to our comments. We don't want to get emotionally involved. We want to keep things under control, that's what roles and rules are for anyway.

"Forget it, it's no big deal", "I'm sorry I said that" are ways of saying let's not deal with our experience of what happened, let's act as if it didn't even occur.

"Don't you think that's a rather personal question?" we say as we define our boundaries in relation to others and imply that we don't want them to know us that well.We seem to prefer to maintain an impersonal distance in order to not have to "expose" ourselves to others. The fear is that others may reject or exploit us as we expose our vulnerability. The numbness from maintaining a shield of protection against the fear of potential pain and rejection results in a sense of alienation both from self and others. We forsake authenticity for roles and rules, intimacy for control and power.

> Each person constructs his/her life through a series of assumptions (belief systems), most of which are learned from others through the developmental stages and enforced by the society in which the person lives... Thus, most people see the world through glasses of other people's making...Each person needs to know his/her own assumptions about life and be able to share them. Such an act...becomes at the same time an act of assertion of the self as well as an act of sharing of the self. This is where we believe that intimacy (closeness) truly exists.
>
> (Wong & McKeen, 1986)

The basic assumptions we have towards life underlie the manner in which we approach our interpersonal relating. These assumptions manifest either implicitly or explicitly through patterned ways of relating to other people. Each of us behaves toward others from a more or less consistent set of assumptions that we have made about ourselves and other people. The set of assumptions we bring to our relating determines the quality of our relationships. Some are rich and satisfying, while others tend to remain superficial and unfulfilling. The way we share (or withhold) ourselves creates our experience of relatedness in the world.

> A choice that confronts every one at every moment is ...shall we permit our fellows to know us as we now are, or shall we remain enigmas, wishing to be seen as persons we are not...This protection comes at a steep price....when we succeed in hiding our being from others, we tend to lose touch with our real selves. This loss of self contributes to illness in its myriad forms. (Jourard, 1971, p.vii).

In the present work, the aim is to develop an awareness and understanding of the process by which we let ourselves be known to others. The work presupposes that it is through the process of our personal contacting another human being and the world in general that we come to know ourselves more fully. The premise is that we have the potential of knowing ourselves through increasing our awareness of our patterns of being-in-the-world. Our potential for self-knowledge can be more fully realized through growth and development which occurs primarily in the context of our personal relating. Acknowlegment and recognition of our patterns of relating can provide a meaningful orientation for understanding our being-in-the-world.

The question being asked in the present research highlights the fundemental nature of personal relating. "What is it like to be personal with another human being?" This question requires an openness to dialogue as a means of understanding the lived-experience. The search for understanding begins with a questioning of the self in order to unveil one's implicit pressupositions about being personal. Self-knowledge provides a clear reference point from which to engage with others. One needs to know where they stand and what they stand for (Heider, 1986). The focus of a study on being personal therfore can be viewed as a self-reflective understanding of the lived-experience of relating closely with another person.

D. Significance of the Study

One of the most significant issues in psychological practice today may be the absence of a pragmatic and philosophical framework for understanding human relating (Koestenbaum, 1978; Dilts, 1980). The need for understanding the process of human relating surfaces in the current existential and interpersonal issues of clients of psychotherapy and in reports and observations of the practitioners' apparent inadequacy in dealing with these issues (Yalom, 1980).

> Psychologists look to philosophers for clarification of their work. Philosophers ask the more fundamental questions regarding the nature of man ... most psychologists are content to work within an established framework of thinking (philosophy) and do not usually question the presuppositions of their work. But sometimes the very meaning of the activities of a scientific discipline becomes questionable, a crisis of identity ... of doubting and questioning, the dialogue opens up and other world views become interesting and important. A search for a new paradigm begins ... an alternative view to make us aware of our implicit assumptions and silently operative precomprehensions and prejudices, and summon us to reflect on the meaning of our doing. (Valle & Von Eckartsberg, 1981, p. 287)

The shortcomings of the current psychological literature in providing insights into the experience of being personal are inherent in the conceptual foundations which support current psychological and educational theory and research (Giorgi, 1970). Natural science, which attempts to understand human beings in a framework based on scientific materialism, has become a dominant cultural paradigm (Ferguson, 1980). Yet it is clear that this scientific vision of an orderly, mechanical, indifferent universe can provide little insight into the problems of human existence (Capra, 1975/1980). The scientist has the freedom to structure experimental situations according to the dictates of his particular set of theories, whereas the practitioner is required to meet human beings and their emerging problems in living. The practice of psychology therefore requires a way of knowing which is concrete, person-oriented, holistic, and contextual (Giorgi, 1984).

This study was concieved out of my own view that psychological practitioners need a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of human relating to assist them in dealing with problems in living which arise out of personal relationships. Understanding more of the nature of personal relating, I believed, could provide therapists with information that could be useful in developing ways of guiding others towards more healthy and fulfilling relationships. The purpose of this study, therfore, focusses on exploring the phenomenon of the lived-experience of persons who have defined themselves as having both a personal and professional interest in understanding the nature of their relating and on describing the underlying structure of the process involved in this kind of relating.

By unveiling the phenomenon of being personal, reflectively thematizing its psychological relevance and understanding its patterned meanings, this study attempts to develop a phenomenologically-based approach to understanding the processes of personal relating. This approach utilizes the lived-experience as a point of departure and views the relationship of the researcher to the co-participants as the context for understanding the phenomenon of being personal.

E. Background Literature

An initial investigation was conducted to assess the related research to date as reported in the current professional literature. A review of "being personal" per se was difficult to construct. "Being personal" has not been defined as a process, a pattern, or a lived-experience, but rather as a series of discrete variables such as "self-disclosure" (Hendrikson, 1984; Brunner & Jones, 1982) "openness" (Schutz, 1985), "close relationships" (Kelly & Berscheid, 1983) and "interpersonal relating" (Anderson, 1985).

Rather than examining the nature of the lived-experience, the research on self-disclosure tends to follow the traditional orientation of focusing on specific variables such as benefits of willingness to self-disclose (Brunner & Jones, 1982), the relationship of feedback and self-disclosure (Anderson, 1985), self-disclosure and trust culturally determined (Wright, 1982) or variablity of self-disclosure with age (Pramuk & Danner, 1982).

The outcomes of conventional research are reported as statements of causal relationship or as confirmations of specific hypotheses as exemplified in the following samples. Brunner and Jones (1982) found that people disclosing high levels of intimate information were perceived as less competent than people disclosing low or medium level of information. Ajzen and Kaplan (1979) discovered that the disclosure of desirable information was seen to result in greater attraction (for the discloser) than disclosure of undesirable information. Skoe and Ksionzky (1985) concluded as they had hypothesized that both males and females generally prefer disclosing to individuals who are perceived as similar to themselves in personality. Although this type of research provides valuable information about certain aspects of being personal, it fails to describe and understand the lived human experience.

In reviewing the literature, I became distinctly aware that the process of being personal has been reduced to a theoretical construct. One extensive research report (Kelley & Berscheid, 1983) in proporting to "assess the current state of the field" discusses the process of being personal in terms of "the conceptual analysis of relationships", "description of roles", "gender patterns in dating and marriage", "the causal context of interaction in close relationships" and an "analysis of conflictual interactions". This tendency to present conceptual frameworks for understanding human relating is also a dominant theme in the area of interpersonal communication (Ross & Ross, 1981; Adler & Towne, 1984; Schutz, 1985).

In the spirit of the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl (1962), the proposed research intends to describe the processes of being personal and then to thematize the patterns which emerge. Out of the fundamental patterns and themes, the researcher can proceed to formulate a statement of the inherent structure in relation to descriptions prepared by prior researchers, novelists or poets (Polkinghorne, 1983).

The early work of humanistic pyschologists provides an impetus and a touchstone for the philosophical perspective of this study. Maslow, Rogers, Jourard and Schutz each offered a perspective on interpersonal relationships which is complementary with the present research. The following summary of their contributions to the study of interpersonal relationships serves to place the present study in a historical and developmental context.

Maslow (1968, 1971), a pioneer of humanistic and transpersonal psychology, suggested that experienced needs are the primary influences on our behavior. The personal requirements which emerge are seen as determining our behavior in terms of our motivations, priorities and actions. Understanding our interpersonal relating involves gaining insight into our unmet wants. One of our primary needs is the desire for what he termed as 'belongingness'. This affinity with others involves the desire to feel accepted and the want for human affection and close loving relationships. Needing to be accepted is largely a matter of wanting to be included and wanting our feelings to be acknowledged and respected. As we move towards developing consciousness of our lived-experience, and meeting needs that arise out of it, we enter into a richer dimension of intimate contact with ourselves, others and life itself. The drive towards satisfying the need for love and belonging can be seen as underlying the act of being personal.

Carl Rogers (1967) recognized that contacting our authentic experience leads to acknowledging our need for love and intimacy, and a preference for openness and sensitivity in our relationships. He felt that if we nourish and support conditions that lead to an awakening of trust then it is likely that we will attract others whose needs, values and perspectives closely match our own. Trust occurs when we feel 'seen' when our feelings are understood or empathically felt by the other. To truly know another in this special way requires an ability to temporarily put aside our own needs, quiet our inner experience and 'be there' for the other.

Rogers (1962) postulated that certain conditions tended to increase the quality of interpersonal relationships. The first essential conditon is congruence, authenticity and genuineness which refer to a way of openly being oneself without facade or front. The second condition is to communicate one's empathic understanding of the other's experience. And the third condition of unconditional positive regard is communicated through acknowledgement, acceptance and caring for the other. Although Roger's conditions were directed towards the therapuetic encounter, they can be seen as providing a basis for any personal relationship.

Sidney Jourard (1971) stated that self disclosure - the ability to talk truthfully about oneself - is a necessary condition for meaningful relating. He contended that we cannot really communicate with another or get to know them unless we both can engage in self-disclosure.

He maintained that although openess is risky, avoiding self-disclosure has consequences that can be more painful and risky than hiding behind a facade. Self-disclosure, he suggested, requires a willingness and ability to trust ourselves in relating with others. Jourard was not suggesting indiscriminate self-disclosure but rather an authentic openness which is appropriate to the given context.

Will Schutz (1984) postulated three fundamental interpersonal needs that account for our behavior when we interact with others. He has stated that all human interaction can be divided into three catagories: inclusion, control and openness. We want to be included in what other people do and also include them in our activities; we need to execise some control over others; and we need to have others care about us and in turn care about them. Like Maslow, Schutz argues that the desire to fulfill these needs is essential to our well being. We interact with others because it is the only way to satisfy these needs. Schutz reasoned that we can gain insight into people generally by understanding needs of one person.

Although each of these authors examined various aspects of interpersonal relationships, what separates their work and the present research is the method of investigation. At the time of their research, each of these writers was developing new ways of seeing the act of being human in interpersonal relationships yet each was bound by the confines of the methodology of natural science. It should be noted that natural science methodologies do not provide procedures for deepening understanding by accessing peoples' lived-experiences. The discussion of the human science approach in the next chapter provides an alternate set of procedures for describing and understanding the experience of interpersonal relating.

II. METHOD

A. Toward a Science of the Person

A human science approach has been chosen in order to provide a research paradigm that supports the present researcher in moving beyond quantification towards a clear description and understanding of the lived-experience of interpersonal relating. The choice of a phenomenological approach for the present study is grounded in the appropriateness of the method to the research question.

It became increasingly clear from my investigation of the various qualitative methodologies and through the process of refining my research question that a phenomenological methodology was best suited for studying the process of personal relating. In a phenomenological inquiry, personal meaning becomes more directly accessible through clear, unbiased descriptions of the lived-experience. Phenomenology is more inclined to view reality through a process model rather than through the indirect measurement procedures of the quantitative method.

In human science, which is formulated to address the nature of human lived-experience, the motivation for procedures needs to emerge from the intrinsic psychological question and essential characteristics of the phenomena being researched:

> Ironically, if we were to imitate the natural sciences, what we should be doing is turning to concrete problems that interest us, trying to solve them as best we know how, and then reflectively describing what we did correctly to solve those problems. That is, in fact how the natural sciences got started ... but it seems clear that what human sciences are imitating is the results of the natural sciences not their manner of operating.
> (Giorgi, 1986, p. 33)

Polkinghorne (1983) encouraged researchers to let each question posed determine which strategies are most useful in answering the particular question. These recommendations are similar to those made by human science theoreticians such as Husserl (1962) in phenomenology, and Dilthey (1977) in hermeneutics.

Gestalt psychologists (Koffka, 1935) have emphasized the need to understand the context of experience in order that the experience itself can be understood. Meaning emerges within an individual's contextual relateness, be it the researcher and his topic or one individual being personal with another. Since researchers have no direct access to any experience but their own (Merleau-ponty, 1962), they must begin by describing their own experience.

How one is experiencing needs to be viewed in the context of what one is experiencing. To see the entire structure of an experience is to look at the whole of what is there. The researcher's awareness of how it is seen provides a direct relationship with the lived-experience of what is. To see is to look at how it is seen. By becoming aware of what is happening, the researcher begins to sense how it is happening. Out of the process emerges a pattern. All process reveals the underlying pattern. Process and pattern, experience and structure, how and what are inseparable and can only be defined in terms of their relatedness or co-constitutional dimensions.

"Why?" is the wrong question for it leads us farther and farther away from the lived-experience into the realm of causal relationships and abstract conceptual explanations. In accepting the premise that "things simply are", one becomes free to explore the nature of a living phenomenon rather than probing the reasons for its existence. Questions related to what the phenomenon is and how it is experienced are more in keeping with the phenomenological orientation of the research methodology.

B. The Research Approach

The present research adopts a methodology of description aimed at deepening our understanding of the experience of being personal. Our data originate from our personal encounters with our world, and from within our individual consciousness. By freeing the researchers of their prejudgments about the data, this approach attempts to describe what is given in experience (process) in order to understand the structural components (patterns) through which the experience is formed.

The present study poses questions of the phenomenal realm in order to discover the patterns and structures which make experience intelligible. The researcher needs to become aware of what is happening (the lived-experience) and how it happens (the emerging pattern). The researcher orients towards process rather than content and describes the world of experience inductively in terms of emerging themes or patterns. From these emerging patterns the researcher identifies the essential deep structures which are implicit in the process. This approach attempts to unfold the essential deep structures of the lived-experience.

Written and spoken protocols of individual experiences provide concrete examples which are then compared in order to establish a basis for discovering essential patterns. The aim in examining the protocols is to be descriptive and reflective while allowing for an unfolding of meaning. The researcher attempts to make explicit the patterns which are implicit in the process of being personal. Derived meanings and understandings are always viewed in relation to the inherent subjectivity of the researchers and an intersubjectivity with that which they are studying. An individual's perceiving is always from a particular and unique vantage point.

In the present study, the researcher begins by acknowledging participation in the process of the lived-experience of being personal. He then proceeds to attend to the emerging patterns which manifest as themes or structures of the process of relating.

The process-pattern method is employed in two interrelated procedures. First, the researcher attempts to describe and interpret the co-researchers' protocols in terms of their lived-experience (process) of being personal and then in terms of the patterns and themes which emerge from the protocol data (Giorgi and Cluster methods). The researcher makes explicit what the co-reseachers are experiencing and how they are experiencing it. In the second part of the method the researcher engages in a self-reflective process (Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5). The aim of the primary researcher is to develop an understanding of the lived-experience by observing himself in relation to the various co-researchers.

The meaning and understanding which researchers subjectively derive from their experiencing are always in the context of their world-relatedness, for they cannot exist without his/her relationship (Giorgi, 1984). Co-constitutional relationships are defined as a recognition of the relatedness of individuals to their world. Therefore to propose to study the process of being personal without suggesting a self-reflective look at the lived-experience of relating with others would provide limited understanding and little meaning. Through participation in and observation of the process of being personal, we can begin to understand the meanings of our own experiences.

> It is phenomenologically unsound to establish a method that must be used that is prior to and independent of the phenomenon to be investigated. The problems of method can not be considered in isolation,but only within the context of the phenomenon to be investigated and the problem aspect of that phenomenon. (Giorgi, 1984, p. 11)

The present approach to research presupposes directionality, what Husserl (1962) called "intentionality", the assumption that all conscious processes are directed towards and related to something. We are always conscious of something whether it be concrete like a table or abstract like being personal. The relationship of the researcher to the research provides an example of his/her tendency to move towards something which can lead to a desired outcome, which in this case is understanding the process of being personal.

The network of relations between individuals and their world underlies both the topic and the methodology of the current research.

C. Why Phenomenology?

The choice of method by which a researcher studies his/her question should carefully reflect the nature of the particular phemomenon under investigation. The purpose of the present study was to develop a more complete understanding of the deep structures of the experience of being personal, specifically to uncover the essential nature of personal relating as it is subjectively experienced. Towards this end, methods were chosen that were believed to be consistent with the processes and the structures of interpersonal relating.

The human science of phenomenology provides a methodology for describing and understanding the lived-experience. Descriptive data are gathered by contacting the phenomenon as it is lived within the experience of the co-researchers (subjects) and the researcher/writer. Variation and flexibility in procedures are employed in gathering and interpreting data. As Giorgi (1970) suggested, the method is always subject to alteration or modification depending on the direction of the emerging data. Specific methods have been designed to direct the attention of co-researchers toward their subjective lived-experience of being personal.

Descriptive, qualitative methods of inquiry are essential when studying processes of personal and interpersonal interaction. Phenomenology acknowledges the complexity and the dynamic nature of human experience which would be altered or lost in using methods which might reduce the phenomenon into a configuration of component parts. The whole of the phenomenon is best understood by understanding the lived-experience of an individual's feelings and intentions in being personal. The assumption providing the foundation for the human science perspective is that phenomena contain essential structures that can be discovered and understood through careful description and interpretation (Giorgi, 1975).

In phenomenology, descriptions by themselves are not sufficient for ensuring psychological understanding of the phenomena. A rigorous method of reflection, which puts aside personal presuppositions and theoretical constructs, is required in order to allow general patterns to filter through idiosyncratic situations. Reflective processes are utilized to bring out the meanings of an individual's experience and to identify the common themes and patterns.

Our immediate encountering in the world and our inner experiencing of remembered or imagined events provide the most direct sources of descriptive data (Polkinghorne, 1983). The sources of description utilized in the present research were derived from the primary researcher's own self-reflective descriptions and from transcriptions of conversations and written statements obtained from co-researchers.

Knowing is considered to be an interpersonal process. This research is therefore aimed at providing an opening to a new viewpoint by expanding on one's own meanings (subjective knowing) while acknowledging that one'e observations are always interpreted through the perspective of those meanings (objective knowing). An expansion of perspective is obtained by getting inside another's private world of experience and meaning through the gathering of concrete descriptions.

Descriptions of lived-experiences were gathered from journal writings as well as from recorded individual and group conversations. This method of data collection was complemented by an ongoing self-reflective process employed by the primary researcher. An attitude of self-reflective questioning was maintained throughout the research process. New ideas and themes emerged from the researcher's individual and co-relational experiences which provided alternative perspectives for viewing the processes of interpersonal relating.

The following questions clearly emerged as a way of initially illiciting descriptions and focusing the research:

"What is it like to be personal?"

"What thoughts, feelings and body responses do you experience when you are being personal?"

"How is being personal different from being impersonal?"

"What is it like to be in rapport with another person?"

"What is it like to be in conflict with another person?"

"What is it like to be open and intimate with another?"

An inherent criterion for this type of research was to be constantly questioning in an attempt to understand the meaning of the emerging data. An ongoing questioning dialogue with the emerging content of the investigation served as a primary focus for a self-reflective examination of the lived-experience of being personal. Such reflection helped the researcher to understand what holds true in individual experience and what is relevant in the broader human context.

The research approach was phenomenological in that it deals descriptively and reflectively with the concrete and complex experience of daily living called being personal. The process of this investigation was one of inductive and discovery-oriented dialogue with the emerging experiential data. The dialogue began with self-reflective descriptions of the researcher's own relationship to the lived-experience of being personal.

D. Bracketing Presuppositions - Autobiographical Reflections

In phenomenology, the researcher is the first and most important source of data as the research question comes out of his/her own lived-experience. The method of seeking understanding necessarily evolves from the beliefs one holds about reality. It is therefore essential for the researcher to engage in personal reflection to identify his/her presuppositions. Self-reflection is an attempt to make explicit the presuppositions and operational assumptions which are implicit in the inquiry and in the articulation of its findings.

The decisions researchers make concerning what they will investigate and how they will do it are determined by a set of operational presuppositions. My own world-view and the questions which brought me to this research are indeed interrelated. Giorgi (1970) indicated that an initial step in phenomenological research is to question carefully these implicit assumptions. This preliminary self-reflection is the process of bracketing. It is directed toward making the implicit assumptions and presuppositions about the focus of the study more explicit from the outset (Polkinghorne, 1983; Colaizzi, 1978).

Researchers need be mindful to allow the phenomenon to emerge on its own rather than force it to fit into artificial predetermined constructs. By identifying out-of-consciousness patterned suppositions, researchers can become aware of how these expectancies can bias or filter the data-gathering process. Researchers need to continue to question their assumptions in face of the emerging data. Each point of view they take rests on certain assumptions they make about reality. When they acknowledge their presuppositions, their bias can then function as a bracketed hypotheses which can provide direction toward investigating and exploring the lived-experience. Yet when pressuppositions are not acknowledged these same assumptions function as personal beliefs which may inhibit the quest for understanding.

Our implicit set of assumptions yields a tremendous unrecognized power over us, to the point where we may be unable to see any point of view other than our own; through the lens of our acquired assumptions, it seems self-evident that this is the only way reality can be. From this position, each of us would therefore argue for the truth of our assumptions, while viewing whatever lies outside of this paradigm through the perceptual filters of our personal beliefs.

Assumptions not questioned tend to function as beliefs that determine what will enter our awareness and what will remain unconscious, thereby delimiting our reality. To experience the world from a particular frame of belief often cuts off direct understanding since no firsthand personal knowing is required. Seeing through one's beliefs is difficult, but can be assisted by observing one's self and by being personal in relating with others. As a researcher, becoming aware of one's paradigm of personal relating is the primary intention of the bracketing procedure.

In reflecting on my own experience of being personal prior to the research process, I found that my presuppositions were best illuminated in terms of my own personal paradigm. The purpose of this discussion is to examine some of my beliefs about being personal which have become habitual patterns and perceptual frames of reference for my individual behavior. In addition I will look at the expression of my beliefs as they manifest in my work as a psychologist/teacher/researcher.

I will begin by clarifying the term "belief". Belief is conviction, faith, acceptance of something as true; an opinion, expectation or doctrine. To define my beliefs about being personal is to state a set of assumptions, values, judgments or ideas held about the meaning of the experience. My experience of being personal is therefore perceived and represented through my own conceptual frame.

Similarly, how difficult it is for me as a researcher clearly to see and hear what I am studying. Ordinarily what we do, as researchers, is to take in the research findings, translate them into something that we already know or are familiar with, and then agree or disagree with their value. If the data fit our pre-structure, beliefs, the things with which we are comfortable, the things we know, then we have confirmed our hypothesis. If the results do not please or fit our structures and beliefs, then we either re-evaluate our position or delete the data. But if we are either agreeing or disagreeing, then we are not really learning something new. For real learning to occur there must be an openness, a putting away of old ideas, so that the possibility of the new can come in. As Krammer (1974) suggested:

> To be in a state of belief means there is no firsthand personal knowledge. If one is in a state of intimate direct understanding then there is no belief. Look inwardly and see the difference so that one can tell for oneself whether one is actually in a state of belief or not. (p. 7)

In order to look inwardly at myself, I need to look at my beliefs about personal relating. My beliefs about being personal can be understood in terms of my personal paradigm (my pattern of beliefs for understanding and explaining my relationships). As Husserl (1962) statedd, before we can understand reality we must be aware of what is there, what we actually experience, instead of starting with theories or concepts and sifting reality through a preformed screen.

The assumptions with which I start this research are extremely important in determining the sort of structures that will subsequently be created. Before and during my research I need to sift through my beliefs and assumptions which I may take to be truths. As the Zen master said to his student as he continued to pour tea into the overflowing cup, "You are like this cup, so full of your own ideas and thoughts that first you must empty yourself in order to take in what I have to teach you." I see that I cannot embrace the new unless I am willing to let go of the old.

What I believe determines much of what I think and do, the way I respond to people, how I think about myself, and how I see the world in general. I have developed structures which I have incorporated into my conceptualization of reality as a result of my conditioning and life experience. My beliefs are from the past, from memory. Shifting to new perspectives is not easy. As Kuhn (1970) has pointed out, those who have worked fruitfully in the old view are emotionally and habitually attached to it. Even when confronted with overwhelming evidence, they stick unyieldingly to the familiar. Becoming aware of these tendencies in the context of understanding my implicit assumptions is an ongoing task which I have chosen to engage in both for my own personal learning and for the purposes of this reasearch. (See Appendix 4 "Bracketing" for a discussion of reflections on my presuppositions prior the research process.)

E. Self-Reflection: Researcher Observing Self

Self-reflection is looking back upon and uncovering that which has been identified, described and interpreted, but which remains implicit without active reflection. The importance of self-knowledge is evident in many of the current human science methodologies. An assumption that underlies these approaches is that the richest source of data is a person's self-reflected knowledge. This perspective implies a trust in an individual's ability to know self, to formulate meanings from one's lived-experience and to know and understand others through empathic reflection and imaginative variation. Barrell and Barrell (1975) argued that self-observation is a primary source of data since an investigator has no direct access to any experience but his own. Annastoos (1986) seemed to support the idea that "a passionately engaged and rigorously disciplined self understanding is the sine qua non for any unprejuiced, balanced psychological interrogation." (p.23) Alapack (1984) stated that, in the final analysis, all understanding is self-understanding.

Investigating the phenomenon of being personal, the present researcher needed to begin with a description and understanding of his own lived-experience. The first step in the research was to address the implications of his own personal struggle with being personal and how that has manifest in his own life. As outlined by Alapack (1984), an explicated self-understanding was utilized as a "springboard" from which to synthesize the protocols of the co-researchers.

In order to gain self-understanding, it is necessary to actually look at myself as I am, to reflect on myself in my lived-experience. This is not easy in that I have all kinds of ideas about how I ought to be, and this often clouds my vision and makes it difficult to see myself as I am. Given the nature of this research it is not possible to see clearly what is being studied until I can come into contact with myself through understanding my processes, patterns and structures of being personal. The purpose of examining my personal experience is an attempt to understand being personal through examining and questioning what emerges through my own experiencing of relatedness. This self-reflective dialogue provides a way to keep "in touch" with what I am studying rather than attempting to study the phenomena apart from myself as an experiencer.

I begin with a basic change in mind-frame to adopt a more reflective and receptive way of observing my experience of being personal. This change involves shifting from a position which would claim that I know the facts of a given situation externally, apart from acknowledging of myself as inherently part of the process. I needed to relinquish conceptual/theoretical thinking and simply to allow the phenomenon that was there to express itself. I needed to dislodge myself from the confinement of my own thoughts by sharpening my sensory contact with both the world and myself. As Giorgi (1970) suggested, to view externally means to view from one's own cognition and imagination, whereas internal, self-reflective viewing is experiencing from the point of view of our bodies.

By recognizing that my experiencing is through the filter of my own preconceptions, I can begin to bracket this conceptual activity and allow meaning to emerge out of the lived-experience. As I become more aware of my own patterns of being I can begin to question the meaning of my lived -experiences. It is my experiencing in the world which directs me to be interested in this particular question rather than another question. My personal biography dictates what I question and what assumptions I bring to my answers.

Questioning is the process by which man's authentic human nature is brought to himself. In this regard, Heidegger (1982) stated:

> Only as a questioning, historical being does man come to himself; only as such is he a self. Man's selfhood means this: he must transform the being that discloses itself to him into history and bring himself to stand in it. (p. 143)

It is from my own personal historical base that I define and continually redefine the research question. It is also from this personal base that I engage the world in order to understand more fully the nature of my question. I take the dialogue which has been started within myself to a relational encounter with others. I do not abandon the self-reflective stance but rather move to interface my dialogue with the lived-experience of others. Each lived-experience of conversation with the co-researchers can subsequently become the object of reflection. My self-reflective perspective is continued throughout the research as a means of questioning and understanding what is emerging from my interactions with others. (See Appendix 5 "Self-Reflective Journal" for a sample of my use of this process.)

F. The Conversations

Conversation is a natural way in which people express their experiences and is therefore considered to be an appropriate vehicle for gaining an understanding of their lived-experience of being personal. Careful note is taken to establish and maintain conversations which are open and receptive and as free as possible from imposed and restrictive structures.

A premise underlying the use of conversations is that to discover something about the lived-experience of the co-researchers, one must ask them about their experiences and thereby find a way of entering their conceptual world. In conversation, reflection about one's experience provides an optimal way of returning to the original feelings and meanings and making contact with the phenomena in question.

I-thou dialogical conversations provided an appropriate methodology for understanding the process of being personal in the present research. The interactive relationship facilitated a reflective process which revealed patterns of meaning for both the co-researchers and the primary researcher. Interpersonal relating in an atmosphere of acceptance and empathy provided an opportunity for the co-researchers to reflect on new and deeper insights about their own experience of being personal. This interactive process became a means of raising questions, uncovering relational understandings and constructing meanings. The process of doing research in this way became a means of creating data.

The process of making contact with the data, although originally thought to take an interview format, was altered to take a form more in line with the conversation (Carson, 1986; Gadamer, 1975). A research method based on conversation (a relational encounter) and founded in philosophical hermeneutics was chosen as the approach most congruent with the proposed question. Hermeneutic inquiry begins with an attempt to understand the question through which researchers enter into their investigation by attempting to uncover an initial statement of understanding (Gadamer, 1975). As in the processes of transformational grammar and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), a presupposition is "a basic underlying assumption which is necessary for a representation to make sense" (Bandler & Grinder, 1982). The purpose of an NLP type of investigation is to unfold the full linguistic representation from which the question is derived. The questioning techniques of NLP (Bandler & Grinder, 1982) were initially considered as they seemed to provide a vehicle for accessing the "deep structure" of an individual's experience. The use of these techniques, however, tended to create a one-sidedness to the interactions, which for the purpose of understanding the process of being personal seemed somewhat of a contadiction and was therefore dropped in favor of the conversational approach.

The interview is designed to elicit information about a topic of interest to the researcher. This often creates an object-subject split by establishing the researcher as questioner and subject as respondent. Interview questioning often puts the responsibility onto others to explain and justify their position rather than facilitating them towards deepening their understanding of the topic of conversation itself. In the process, the subject becomes prone to rationalizations and explanations that lead farther and farther away from an awareness of personal experiencing and of the nature of personal processes.

Rather than removing oneself through the interviewer stance, the researcher using conversation enters as a person who is willing to listen and discuss his own experiences. In an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust where self-disclosure is valued, full and meaningful descriptions are more likely to emerge. In conversation, our shared curiosity about the topic of study provides an opportunity for expressing our individual attempts at understanding both our questions about relating and our underlying statements on being personal. We enter into conversation by sharing our self-reflected and presently lived-experience of what it is like to be personal.

Each act of revealing can be understood in the context of our self-referencing of our experience. This occurs by maintaining an openness to our own authentic experiencing and a willingness to share these experiences. Openness and an attitude of acceptance which allows space for each individual's meaning to emerge is the essence of the conversational approach (Gadamer, 1975) It is through this sharing, this meeting in open dialogue, that individuals become willing to reveal the essence of their lived-experience. This idea of openness, of allowing space for others to manifest their meaning, their being-in-the-world, may point to a way of defining the nature of the process of this study.

In the present research the process of the investigation needs to maintain congruence with the topic in question. The process of this present study can best be understood in a context where the process of being personal can be experienced. A relational approach, such as conversation, is therefore seen as providing a context for meaningful communication which is congruent with the question at hand.

The conversation requires a letting go of the security of set premeditated questions and trusting that out of process a content will emerge. The true question "comes to us": It is not that we need to pose the question as much as we need to attend to the unknown that "arises" and "presents itself" through the dialogue. Gadamer (1975) points out the salient difference between the questioning of the hermeneutic approach and the rhetorical-pedagogical questioning wherein the question often stands apart from the questioner. Rhetorical questioning is not derived from a real question based on a desire to know but rather is posed in order to compare with an answer which is already known.

The questioning is based on an authentic presupposition that "involves knowing that one does not know". To ask the question is to raise the possibility of knowing that which is presently unknown, the possibility of discovering something new. Our curiosity creates a point of departure, an impulse to explore what is unknown. It is our attitude of openness and curiosity that draws us towards what is not known.

Understanding through conversation is "not merely a matter of total self-expression and the successful assertion of one's own point of view, but a transformation into a communion in which we do not remain what we were" (Gadamer, 1975). This process of inquiry presumes an attitude towards opening up the topic under consideration and clarifying that which unfolds in such a way that there is a genuine understanding in the making.

We begin with the question, "What is it like to be personal with another?" The question is not, "What is being personal?" but rather the focus is on "How do you experience being personal?" The question directs us to our experience of past, present and immediate situations where being personal is lived. This core research question provided a focus and a point of departure for the conversations.

G. The Setting

The data gathering was conducted at a one month personal and professional development seminar entitled "New Horizons". The residential context provided a live-in community of ninteen participants, two instructors, seven staff and a number of visitors and guest lecturers. The participants were mostly employed in the helping professions of medicine, psychology, social work, and education. The daily routine of meals, seminar time and adhoc group study sessions provided many opportunities for participants to experience their personal relating. The interpersonal focus of the seminar stimulated dialogues which were carried on throughout the day. The experiential design of the seminar also encouraged the participants to take a self-reflective attitude which was complementary to the research approach.

H. The Co-Researchers

The criterion used for the selection of the eight co-researchers was based on individuals' willingness to engage in, and their personal commitment to explore, the processes of being personal. The fact that all of the co-researchers were participants in a month long personal development seminar indicated their predisposition towards personal exploration and self-reflection. In addition, all of these individuals had previously participated in personal and professional development workshops and seminars. The entire group of nineteen seminar participants were introduced to the nature of the research which was to take place. Ten people attended a follow-up meeting and eight indicated a commitment to participate in the study over the 26 day period.

Each of the co-researchers expressed an interest in understanding their personal relating and indicated a willingness to engage in conversations about their experience. A more detailed explanation of the nature of the research was provided as an orientation to their involvement in the study. A written statement which outlined the study and posed some relevant questions was also distributed at that time. (See Appendix 6.)

Each co-researcher was involved in two one-hour conversations, four one-hour group meetings and the keeping of a journal over the 26 day seminar period.

Individual conversations and journals initially constituted the central methods of gathering data. As the research progressed, the journals provided data which were high in quality, although somewhat lower in quantity than originally anticipated. The predisposition, discipline and time required to keep an ongoing written record varied as the demands from the seminar increased. The richness and quality of the journal data served to compliment the transcribed conversations and group sessions.

The phenomenological approach encompasses ideas of participation and collaboration between the 'researcher' and the 'subjects' in such a way that they can work together as co-researchers. In the present research, the term co-researcher refers to an individual who participates in investigating a process of mutual interest. Co-researchers are not viewed as subjects but rather as fellow human beings who have a shared interest in exploring their process of interpersonal relating.

The individual historical context of both the researcher and the co-researcher is an important component of the relational encounter. With this in mind, the co-researchers were asked to pose their own question(s) which would serve to guide their exploration through the various dimensions of the research context.
Co-researchers were asked to arrive at a question which emerged out of their own experience of being personal and

called for their further understanding. The posing of a question begins the exploration into what Gademar (1976) calls the underlying experience of negativity, the acknowledgment of that which we do not know.

In the conversational encounter, to be open and curious in questioning what is relevant in each co-participant's experience is the way to real knowing. A mutual commitment to engage in the process of generating new understanding set the stage for a genuine encounter in context of a research and a personal relationship. The co-creative dimensions of this approach bring the researcher together with another person in a true meeting of "I" and "Thou".

Colaizzi (1978) indicated that experience with the investigated topic and articulateness suffice as the criteria for selecting co-researchers. In the given context of a residential professional training program, participants come with a willingness to be open and self-reflective in their learning. A predisposition towards developing understanding through exploring and examining personal experience adds a critical dimension to the selection of co-researchers for the present research.

> For our purposes here we want co-researchers who have the active capacity to observe self in process while silencing conceptual activity before it prejudices the meanings, feelings and intentions. When

> experience is observed but not genuinely, participated in, the experience becomes empty of meaning. When we participate without observing we fail to arrive at understanding and integration of the experience itself. It is when we can both participate in experience itself and observe that we can understand. Otherwise we obtain only knowledge about something, as opposed to knowing. (Andersen, 1984, p. 17)

The ability of co-researchers to observe the self in process will be useful in developing an awareness of what it is like to be personal and in providing self-reflective descriptions of their experience of interpersonal relating. The value of human science research lies in the ability of its methods to evoke the co-participants' experience of the phenomenon rather than their conceptualization of it (Barrell & Barrell, 1975).

The number of participants does not pose methodological problems since the aim of the study is not generalizability but rather description of the core patterns, themes and structures of being personal as experienced by the co-researchers. In the phenomenological approach where descriptions rather than correlational or causal relationships are sought, random sampling of a large population of subject is unnecessary.

I. Defensible Knowledge Claims

Central to phenomenological research is the question of validity. This is defined as a valid representation of the the data, that is the descriptions of the co-researchers. The researcher can ensure an accurate presentation by staying close to the data, remaining sensitive to qualitative distinctions, maintaining a holistic perspective and by focussing on co-researchers' meanings. In empirical and experimental research, validity refers to the reliablity and standardization of data-gathering tools to ensure replication of a given procedure. A research procedure is deemed valid if it produces a correspondence between these tools and the external reality (Salner, 1986). This view of methodological validity is based on the positivist assumption regarding the correspondence theory of truth. Facts are out there and our ideas, theories, and methods of measuring these facts must correspond. The notion of validity as defined in natural science research is considered to be too narrow to capture the human science researcher's efforts to present findings that can be deemed a contribution to knowledge of human experience.

Rather than enter into a defense of the validity of human science research from within the context of an empirically oriented set of assumptions, the present researcher finds it more useful to examine validity in terms of human science research. It makes more sense to redefine valitity in terms of defensible knowledge claims (Salner, 1986). Trustworthiness of knowledge is based on intersubjectivity and questions of validity relate to description, usefulness and potential for meaning.

The validity of knowledge claims can be evaluated in terms of inter-subjective agreements based on socially and culturally construed reasonableness, tacit knowing, contextual relativism and trial-and-error learning (Polkinghorne, 1983). The question of whether phenomenological descriptions express the lived-experience of the phenomenon of study is central to the making of knowledge claims. Phenomenological descriptions should not be derived from some predetermined theoretical or conceptual explanation but must refer directly to the experience as lived.

Phenomenological research is often dismissed as subjective and unscientific because the sample size is too small to guarantee representative findings, the procedures are not standardized and therefore not replicable, and the interpretations are subjective and researcher biased. While in some cases these objections may be well-founded, for the most part they show an inadequate understanding of the nature of phenomenolgical research. If validity is the extent to which a procedure investigates what it

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intends to investigate, then the validity of a phenomenological method clearly depends on the research question, what is being studied and for what purpose. A given method therefore needs to be examined in terms of the relationship of the "content" of the specific phenomenon and the "process" of the specific procedure.

Validity in the human sciences is defined as a valid representation of the data in relation to the truth of the co-researchers' responses (Von Eckartsberg, 1983, Wertz 1984). An accurate presentation of the data can be ensured by remaining sensitive to qualitative distinctions and focusing on the individual meanings contained in the transcripts. This trustworthiness of the data is based on inter-subjective agreements between the co-researchers and ultimately with the reader. Questions of validity in the present study relate to the trustworthiness of the descriptions and their usefulness and potential for developing an understanding of the meaning of being personal. The steps taken in this study to assure the trustworthiness of the data included checking and rechecking data with colleagues/co-researchers and making explicit the researcher's own presuppositions and assumptions.

Research findings can be assessed in terms of being reasonable within the framework of the researcher's assumptions and contextual perspective. Methods and procedures, if explicated, can make it possible for another researcher to replicate the study. In the context of posing the same research question to a similar group of co-researchers, another researcher should find that the core patterns and structures would remain consistent. Differences in emphasis in the co-researchers' descriptions and in the researcher's interpretations would necessarily arise as a result of the changed context.

Reliability in the natural science approach is established if controls are adequate to allow for replication of procedures which should therefore yield the same results. Similarly, phenomenologists believe that if bias is minimized then it is possible to yield similar yet not necessarily the same results. In the natural science methodology, the researcher compromises applicability to the lived-experience in exchange for generalizability and statistical significance. Since the purpose of phenomenonlogy differs from the quantitative methods, the phenomenologist gives up confidence for a comprehensive, descriptive undersatnding of the lived-experience.

Defensible claims of knowledge in the human sciences are based on the premise that knowledge is established through inter-subjective agreements. The present study is therefore founded on a developing understanding of the process of being personal through the question of how the experience is meaningfully shared among people.

Inter-subjective agreements are the implicit and unspoken understandings which offer others the possibility of returning to the phenomenon as it emerges and moving beyond the presuppositions of the researcher. Inter-subjective understanding therfore becomes an avenue for not only enriching and adding to the results of the present study but for communicating and eventually offering possibilities for generalized understanding. The results of this study are then generalizable to the extent that they are shared by other people.

J. Emerging Meaning -- Processing the Data

The map is not the territory; it is only a descriptive representation of that which is. In order to create accurate maps, one must spend time in the territory in order to appreciate more fully that which is there. It is through a resonating with and opening to that which is there that the researcher is allowed to draw out what is essential. An attitude of open receptivity ensures an approach to understanding the data which allows for an organic emergence of the salient features in concert with the researcher's own perspective. The unfolding of data through questioning is the basis of the present research and is founded on the "hemeneutic circle" (Taylor, 1979).

The process of questioning transforms the researcher's lived-experience into a full and enriched understanding of what it means to be personal. The interface between the experience and the experiencing creates the possibility for a story to emerge. In telling their story, people come to know more fully the essential nature of their experience and their integral part in it.

In the present study a procedure for processing the data, based in phenomenological research methodology, was considered for use. The adapted procedure (Colaizzi, 1978) consists of five distinct steps.

1. The researcher reads and listens to the data to develop a sense of the co-researchers' protocol descriptions of their experience of being personal.
2. Significant statements which pertain to the process of being personal are identified and drawn out of the protocols.
3. In formulating meanings of the significant statements, the researcher must make the leap from what is said to what is meant. In this regard, Colaizzi (1978) indicates that the meanings arrived at should never sever the connection with the original protocol. The formulations must attempt to reveal what is hidden in the various contexts and horizons of the investigated phenomena which are present in the original protocols. At this stage the task of the researcher is to go beyond the original data while maintaining a connection with them. The object is not to formulate meanings

which are not connected with the data but rather to let the data speak for themselves.

4. These meanings are then clustered into emerging themes which are common to each of the protocols.
5. A fundamental phenomenological description of the process of being personal is made which intergrates the results to this point. From this exhuastive description, a statement is formulated which identifies the fundamental structures of being personal.

The structures of this systematic procedure serve as a guideline for developing appropriate procedures for understanding the data. Given that there is no cookbook recipe available (Keen, 1975), the specific procedures therefore need to emerge from the questions intrinsic and essential to the present research toward developing an understanding of the meaning of the lived-experience of being personal. In keeping with the phenomenological nature of the present study, the process of being personal is not reduced to fit a pre-existing set of methods and procedures. The emerging procedures need to remain intergral to the primary objective of this study, which is to uncover and describe the essential underlying patterns of the lived-experience of being personal. Flexibility in procedure is an inherent criterion for this type of research, which consists of questioning and re-questioning in an attempt to understand the emerging data.

K. The Research Process

The initial step in the process of making sense of the data was to listen repeatedly to each taped conversation and to read each journal. The verbatim transcripts were then read and re-read to develop an impression of the whole of the lived-experience for the individual co-researcher. In making sense out of the narrative of the recorded conversations or written protocols, I began by a self-reflection of what I was experiencing as I engaged in listening or reading and reliving each personal encounter. This was not intended as an interpretation of the meaning of conversations but rather as an acknowledgement of what I was experiencing and discovering about myself as I engaged with the recorded data. The act of dwelling in the life-world of other people's experience allowed me to become more aware of my own experience of the meaning of being personal.

Looking for relevant descriptive statements, I proceeded to uncover themes that emerged as I read the transcipts. These succinct descriptions were then edited from the original transcipts. Careful attention was taken to ensure that each protocol maintained its relevance to the central research question and provided a rich description of the experience. In moving from what was said to what was meant, I incorporated a method suggested by Giorgi (1987) which involved writing comments after each significant statement which reflected its meaning. Recurrent patterns began to emerge which I clustered into three groupings. The results of this research process are presented in the fourth chapter. (See Appendix 1 "Imaginative Variation" for a sample of research procedure.)

In order to ensure the validity of the process to this point, I elicited the assistance of five graduate students and three professors to read and discuss two of the transcripts. The resultant discussions provided an inter-subjective check which confirmed and reframed my thinking. Out of this dialogue and feedback evolved a framework for my interpretation of the data. The purpose of this procedure was to illuminate what was already present in the data in a way that described the essential deep structure of being personal. (See Appendix 3 "Illustrative Narrative".)

In the present study, the researcher begins with descriptions of the process, which is the lived-experience. The researcher then proceeds to attend to the emerging patterns, themes, and structures of the given descriptions. Using these fundamental patterns, the researcher proceeded to formulate statements of inherent structures. These patterns and an explication of the deeper structural features of the phenomenon under study are illustrated through excerpts from individual transcipts. These data are outlined in the fifth chapter. (A sample of the process-pattern-structure method can be found in Appendix 2).

III. OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

A. Introduction

A phenomenological analysis begins with open-ended descriptions obtained from co-researchers. Asked to attend to their daily experiences of being personal, the co-researchers described these experiences in journal writings and in conversations with the primary researcher. This open-ended approach to gathering concrete descriptions allows for a minimum of influence from the primary researcher's presuppositions and biases. The purpose of the present research is to understand personal relating as it is experienced in the lives of the co-researchers.

The difficulty in any research method is that it creates a context which intervenes with the flow of everyday experience. The act of asking people to talk or write about their experiences requires them to attend to their experience in a way which is different from the everyday manner of being. Yet at the same time this request for self-reflection and expression is considered to provide concrete descriptions of actual lived-experience over a given time frame.

In the present study, I elicited the participation of eight adult co-researchers in order to provide data for understanding their experiences of being personal. Although unique, these experiences are also considered to reflect a universal humanness. Co-researchers wrote in journals and engaged in conversations which were recorded and transcribed. Each transcription was examined using the method described in the previous chapter. Rather than just seeing these descriptions as sources of facts, they were examined for their psychological meanings with the aim of identifying characteristic themes and structures of being personal.

The eight protocols were reviewed to determine the quality of their descriptions of being personal. Since the phenomenological method deals with the life-world and with phenomenon as it presents itself, it is important to obtain data which contain both quality and depth of experience. Two of the co-researchers were selected whose transcripts/ journals provided the most extensive and comprehensive protocol descriptions. The remaining transcripts added little to the quality, richness and depth that these two descriptions provide.

The presentation of data is above all a matter of communicating ideas and eliciting trains of thought and associations within the reader which ultimately leads to an understanding of the phenomenon of being personal.

Even when the writer tells the reader how the findings have been interpreted, the meaning that is produced is still a result of ideas, associations, mental processes, and understandings that are already in existence in the reader's mind and are consequently aroused by what is read. Effective phenomenological writing seeks to reveal the personal experiences of both the writer and the co-researchers in ways that will resonate with the reader's life-world. The purpose is to enlarge and enrich the reader's experience of the phenomena. For the purposes of clarity, economy and simplicity, the co-researchers' transcripts, the writer's own self-reflections, and the associative experiences that you, the reader, have as you interact with the data will serve as the vehicle for developing an understanding of the meaning of being personal.

Contained in this chapter are descriptions of the unique experiences and perceptions of two people. These descriptions express what they authentically and intimately know about themselves and are willing to express openly. In reporting their experience of being personal, the co-researchers may assist the readers in clarifying their own sense of personal relating and thereby permit them to agree, disagree, compare, and contrast their own experience with those expressed in the protocols.

Readers bring to this encounter their own life experiences in personal relating which allow them to resonate with the descriptions of the writer and the co-researchers. For the reader, the process of being personal may differ in style or form and yet it is the essential humanness underlying the descriptions which can stimulate associations with their own lives. The following presentation of the research findings derived from co-researchers' journals and recorded conversations provide descriptions of their internal experience and their understanding of the meaning of the human encounter of being personal.

B. Organizing the data

The need to understand underlies a need for order. It is this need to order, to make sense of experience, that nesecessitates a structure in the research process. A focussed data gathering process sets the stage for this ordering of experience; explicating essential themes describing a phenomenon elucidates its pattern and meaning. Several forms of results have been generated for the purpose of understanding the essential structures of the process of being personal. The flow chart which follows outlines the sequence of procedures used in this study.

Sequence of Procedures

1. Forming succinct protocol descriptions
2. Intersubjective agreements - checking with others
3. Grouping significant words and meanings
4. Imaginative Variation
5. Process Pattern Structure
6. Illustrative Narrative
7. Giorgi's Method
8. Clustering Patterns
9. Description of Structure

1. Succinct Descriptions

The first step in the process of ordering the information was listening to the recordings and reliving each of the conversations. Repeated listening and openning to the conversations allowed me to enter the world of the co-researcher by way of our shared history. This process of dwelling with the conversations involved moving back and forth between listening and typing a complete verbatim transcript of each audio-taped conversation. This intensive involvement with the data was a way for me to begin to percieve intuitively the existing patterns in a protocol. I then began a more systematic search for succinct descriptions that might describe what was essential in each protocol.

These succinct descriptions were written in the co-researcher's own words or in very close approximations in an attempt to illuminate a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of being personal. The statements provide us with the co-researcher's individual expressions which tend to resonate with our own life experiences and suggest the general structure of being personal. I read and listened to the data to develop a sense of the co-researchers'"protocol" (description) of their experience of being personal. I noted variations in meaning and proceeded to group common statements while eliminating repetition and discarding descriptions not relevant to the phenomena. "Significant statements" which pertained to the process of being personal were identified and drawn out of the protocols. These statements were later grouped into themes in a manner that best expressed the experience as lived by the individual. (For economy, the succinct descriptions are presented later under the headings "Giorgi's Method" and "Clustering Patterns".)

2. Intersubjective agreements - checking with others

In phenomenolgical research an ecological understanding of the phenomena is achieved through a sense of validation or confirmation. Relationships of validation were established by enlisting the assistance of collegues to read and discuss my findings at various points during the research process. These relationships provided way of checking my findings with people who would read and discuss their reactions. These interactions allowed feedback which proved valuable in editing and re-working the data. The collaborative nature of these meetings often generated additional information. This process of checking and discussing the emerging findings with others assisted me in moving towards what was essential in the data.

3. Grouping significant words and meanings - themes

To begin to uncover themes that revealed the core structure of the experience, significant words and phrases of what was essential to the co-researcher's experience were noted in the original transcripts. These words and phrases were circled in the transcripts using a procedure called "highlighting" (van Manen, 1984). A dictionary search for word meanings helped to place parts of each protocol into thematic groupings. The themes of fear, expectations, judgements, withholding, authenticity, relatedness, etc. emerged in a recurrent manner and served as groupings for the succinct descriptions. (See Appendix 2 "Patterns" for a sample of this procedure.)

4. Imaginative variation

In this procedure, I examined the themes from one of the protocols by imagining that I was experiencing being personal through the lens of these themes. In this technique, I intentionally altered, through imagination, aspects of the sample data. I took each theme and wrote about my experience of being personal in terms of the specific theme. The themes were initially addressed in terms of the writer's experience of being personal with the reader of this thesis as a means of providing a concrete expression of my lived experience. This procedure allowed a deepening of understanding and a clarity of description of the emerging themes. (See Appendix 1 "Imaginative Variation" for a sample of this procedure.)

5. Process - pattern - structure

Other themes from the sample transcript were examined through the use of a composite case example from the writer's experience. I wrote in my own words what I was experiencing in an imagined situation using the different thematic contexts which were derived from the protocols. This variation yielded other concrete examples of the themes of "fear", "judgements", "put-downs", etc. The examination of the patterns and structures of this variation provided a useful procedure for moving from the succinct descriptions and themes to identifying the patterns, and finally, to a description of the structure. (See Appendix 2, Process - Pattern - Structure for a sample of this procedure.)

6. Illustrative narrative

In this procedure I asked the data what themes and meanings were present in the transcripts. I then proceeded to write a composite narrative of what was emerging from the various transcripts while remaining true to the experience being reported. I wanted to organize the data according to my gestalt of the experience of being personal as it was emerging in the protocols. This form of result was intended to provide a summary of my understanding of the phenomena up to this point and allow for an engaging way to present the data. (See Appendix 3, "Illustrative Narrative" for a sample of this procedure.)

7. Giorgi's method

In discussing my research process in a meeting with Amedeo Giorgi, a number of suggestions were offered. First he commented on the richness of the data and indicated that I should limit myself to working with one or two protocols. He reiterated that in phenomenology the focus was on obtaining quality of description and suggested that I would get diminishing returns by increasing the sample. Then he suggested a procedure which would assist in moving from what was said to what was meant. Each statement from the transcript is followed by a statement by the researcher which attempts to reflectively describe the meaning of the passage. (See "Giorgi's Method" later in this chapter for a sample of this procedure.)

8. Clustering patterns

The themes are combined with relevant succinct statements and are then clustered into patterns. I wrote general statements that describe the essential constituents of the phenomenon, highlighting the co-researchers' previously stated implicit meaning. To begin to uncover patterns that revealed the core structure of the experience, I read and reflected on each succinct description a number of times to look for relevant phrases or statements. These significant words and their meanings were grouped as a way of organizing the significant statements. At this step I asked of the transcript, "What is essential to this person's experience of being personal?"
(See "Clustering Patterns" later in this chapter for a sample of this procedure.)

9. Description of structure

The essential structural constituents of the experience of being personal are discussed. Using the succinct descriptions, themes, patterns and the imaginative variations as a springboard, I proceeded to examine the psychological structures which emerged. I asked the data, "What is essential to the psychological organization of the experience of being personal?" I went on to write general statements that describe the essential constituents of the phenomenon, highlighting their strutural interrelations. (See Chapter IV for discussion of structure).

Each of the above procedures was applied to the data as a means of illuminating an understanding of the meaning of being personal. The sequence of procedures shows the developmental movement of the research process. For the purpose of economy and clarity, some of the earlier procedures have been placed in the appendices. The results of the last three steps indicated in the sequence of procedures will be discussed in detail as they represent how the research process moved towards a description of the phenomenon. The balance of this chapter is devoted to examining the data through the use of two of the procedures mentioned: "Giorgi's Method" and "Clustering Patterns". Chapter IV extends the results yielded by these two procedures in discussing the deep structures of the phenomenon.

C. Analyzing the Data

This phase in ordering the information began by identifying recurrent themes and uncovering a patterned order. Within the following procedures, an intuitive process for discerning themes was maintained to allow for the meaning to emerge. The process of revealing meaning was established by a continual shifting from the phenomenon of experience and the reflections it evoked.

The practice of establishing summaries of the experience while retaining the concrete particulars of the original statements provided a guiding framework of the data interpretation.. The purpose of this step was to draw from the succinct descriptions the general meanings inherent in the lived-experience. This was achieved by first using Giorgi's method and then followed by clustering the patterns.

1. I proceeded to develop an "empathic presence" by entering the described situations and contacting the depth and breadth of the experience as it was lived.
2. In "formulating meanings" of the significant statements, I needed to make the leap from what was said to what was meant. The meanings arrived at and formulated should never sever all connection with the

original protocols; formulations must discover what is hidden in the various contexts and horizons of the investigated phenomenon which are announced in the original protocols (Colaizzi, 1973). At this stage the task is to go beyond the original data to understand what is implied rather than just what is stated, while still maintaining a connection with the original statement (Giorgi, 1987). The object is not to formulate meanings which are not connected with the data but rather to let the data speak for themselves. This stage is called "Giorgi's Method".

3. These meanings were then clustered into emerging patterns which were repeated or developed through the protocols.

Giorgi's method (1987) requires that one first read the co-researcher's statement as he/she understand it, then read the second statement of the writer and see how it reflects, empathizes and brings understanding to what is meant by the co-researcher's original description. The point to be remembered here is that in phenomenolgical research, it is not so much whether another perspective with respect to the data could be adopted (this is presupposed) but whether you the reader, adopting the same viewpoint as articulated by the writer, can also see what the writer has seen and whether or not one agrees with it.

The researcher is asked at this point to begin to determine what patterns, themes or meanings emerge as he/she reflects on what is read in the context of the research question. Ask the question of each of the descriptions, "What is it like to be personal?" Then follow up with "What stops you from being personal?" The purpose of this focus is to assist you in developing an attitude that questions what each statement tells you about being personal and how it reveals significance about the nature of personal relating.

This procedure will assist the reader in developing a more in-depth understanding of the deeper structure of each statement. If the statements are read only for their surface structure then there is a tendency to miss the underlying significance and meaning implicit in the description. The method therefore suggests that you read not only for what is said but also for what is meant.

Giorgi's Method - Co-researcher D

I am afraid to let myself be known.
- D is reluctant to let others know him.

In my attempts to be personal I am filled with fear.
- D trys to be personal yet is apprehensive.

Fear Tightness Being closed
- D experiences distress, feels cramped or constricted and an overall sense of being blocked or restricted.

What will they find out?
- D has concerns about what others may find out about him.

If only I can maintain the image. I will be safe.
- D believes that the personality that he presents to others will ensure a sense of protection from possible harm.

I will be me. Image. Maintain it at all costs. To them. To myself.
- D believes he can be himself when he is safe. This image management comes from representing himself in a particular way.

Needing desperately to be open and connecting with others. Hesitant to open myself up to do this. This is my struggle.
- D is caught in the despair of wanting to link up with others by disclosing himself but is reluctant and fearful of what would happen if he did reveal himself.

I want to be able to be myself without guard.
- D desires to be able to present himself while not needing to shield who he is.

And even when I feel guarded, I want to find a way of getting through or getting out of the way the stuff that stops me from being myself in my relations with others. It is not something I find I do very easily - a lot of "stuff" gets in the way.
- D wants to remove that which impedes him in being himself with others.

It's got to do with fear, with people knowing me or of someone knowing something about me that I don't know about myself.
- D expresses concern that there are aspects of himself that others may be aware of that he is blind to.

In being open the vulnerable part is telling you about my fears. The stuff that I feel vulnerable about is the stuff that you could use to attack or hurt me. It would be some power you have over me, something you could say or do to really hurt. Like being betrayed, I trust and end up getting hurt. It's like an exchange of goods, if I don't have anything on you then I'm wary.
- D is apprehensive about how what he shares can be and has in his past experience has been used against him.

So I could say that what you're doing or could do is what's stopping me from being personal.

- D suggests that it is possibly something the other person is doing that is preventing him from being personal.

What I would need in order to feel safe and move out and feel comfortable is for you to fit what I would consider to be a safe person.
- D believes that he would feel open to relating if the other satisfied certain conditions of comfort.

Someone who is able to take what I am saying at a gut level, who is accepting of me. If I felt accepted by you maybe this other stuff wouldn't matter at all, maybe the base of feeling accepted is all I need.
- D realizes that what he really wants from others is to feel accepted.

I lay a whole bunch of expectations at your feet and say if you want to be personal with me this is how you do it.
- D recognizes how his expectations of others are part of being personal for him.

I can intellectualize by saying that these are my issues but to accept them and talk about them comfortably is very difficult. I haven't really accepted them as part of me so there are always blocks, ways of trying to prevent people from getting in.
- D reveals how uncomfortable it is to talk about himself and how that makes it difficult to get close to him (because they can't really know him if he doesn't express who he is).

I judge people as too intellectual, too superficial, I objectify them by putting them up on a pedistal. I act as if the perception were reality and separate myself from people by putting myself down or by feeling superior to them.
- D sees how he distances himself from others through his evaluations and judgements. He also notices that he acts as if the judgements are the way things are.

It's kind of like that in my relationship with K. I'm quite scared of K maybe because I have a sense of her as knowing a lot. I feel very open and raw with her. I always feel like I'm going to her defended, a bit subordinate. But on the other hand I'm really attracted to her not really sexually but exactly for those things I feel charged about. These are situations I usually back off of. I'm really

defended, she does all the talking, I want to say more but I figure she's got more to say I really put myself down in relationship to her, I've got nothing to say that's of value.
- D perceives K as better than him. D feels vulnerable and protective in relation to K. D is attracted to K for the very reason he is fearful of her.

I want to be personal with her more than anybody here and am more afraid of it with her than anybody else here. I have the idea she is going to reject me out of hand, much more easily than anyone else here would. I'm embarassed, I think she'll think I'm stupid and won't have anything to do with me.
- D feels caught between his attraction and his want to be personal with K and his fear of rejection and possible humiliation.

I find it difficult to move to another level of relating. I try to move out and make the connection when I want to be personal and I want to share something. I guess what really stops me is what stops me all the time, I'm afraid to be as open as I might want to be.
- D desires to share and be connected yet finds it difficult to be self-disclosing.

What feels risky or scary for me may not feel that way for you. I may feel that I am being open and yet for you being open would mean something very different.
- D feels that at times he is being open and others don't experience his openness.

A choice to be personal is sometimes conscious and sometimes not. I can see that it's possible to be personal with most of the people here. But I'd rather spend my time doing something else rather than spend my time trying to get to someone with whom my connections aren't really that good. Or if I've had a misunderstanding with someone is it really worth it to clear it up? It might take an hour or a couple of hours to talk it through and right now I'm saying no. I guess it's a matter of priorities.
- D questions his motivation in being personal.

I know there are certain payoffs that I highly value but it's work to do it and I can't just move with it. It's a sense of belonging, an affirmation of self. Feeling alive, feeling integrated. There is something about connecting with a person that is affirming to my

life, something at my core.
- D sees the value of being personal in connecting more fully with himself and others.

I know I'm sitting on a lot because I know there are parts of myself that I just don't bring forward at all I keep so much under wraps and that really stiffles me and stops me from really meeting people. What I tend to do is often just sit back and listen or ask questions rather than put out what's happening with me.
- D realizes that he is not expressing himself fully and often adopts a passive/receptive way of engaging with others.

They say "be yourself as fully as you can" and that really makes sense to me yet I really don't know who "my self" is I keep it so tightly under wraps.
- D would like to live up to this ideal but realizes that he cannot express himself if he doesn't know who he is.

With A if I can be loving with some understanding of where she's at I can be open to being there for her even though she's going through this stuff. And if I can't or if I'm not open to it then we just flare up and end up in a big fight. I don't move towards resolution of my conflicts in my relation with A. I accept alot of uncertainty.
- D reveals that he tends to stay away from his differences with A and in turn acknowledges the uncertainy inherent in unresolved issues with another.

The way I dissipate conflicts is move through a state of anger to a stage of wanting to get back together and be close. We do that physically without the anger being resolved and I think that happens for us by coming together sexually. It's great foreplay, but anger doesn't get resolved. We just set the issues aside and kind of pretend that everything is ok again.
- D suspects that coming together sexually is the way he diffuses conflict and creates illusion of harmony.

My attempts to be personal were driven by paranoia. I have a strong discomfort when I don't know where I sit with someone. Here I was dropped into a setting where I didn't know anyone, hardly and was supposed to interact with them. This was for me very anxiety provoking.
- D feels apprehension about relating with new people.

My first task became to sort out my boundaries with each of the people here.
- D feels a need to clarify where he is with each person.

They fell into several categories.
- D places each person into various groupings.

Not Interested in Them - people whose presence raised no real issues for me.
- D views the individuals in this group as easily dismissed.

Possible Friendship - people who shared some common stuff, interests, intellectual framework, etc. These people I'd feel comfortable with and wouldn't find terribly challenging.
- D sees that with these individuals he can feel safe but not greatly stimulated.

Sexual Attraction
- D separates those whom he is sexually attracted to into another group.

Fear - These were the ones I could read the least and immediately aroused my transferance issues. I felt uncomfortable around them and needed to know where the they were at in order to relax with them.
- D suggests that in relation to these individuals he feels uneasy and needs to know better who they are in order to feel more comfortable.

It was this latter group that I pursued with the most interest. I tried to befriend them (diffuse them).
- D indicates that he expended the most energy towards the groups of individuals he felt fearful of in an attempt to reduce his sense of threat.

As two weeks have passed the following has happened. The not interested in them group has moved to friendship or stayed in not interested. Friendship group has moved to not interested or stayed in friendship. The sexual group has moved to not interested. The fear group has stayed in fear or moved to friendship.
- D indicates that in each group he has either moved towards or away from the individuals.

My reasons for being personal were different according to group. I really spent a lot of time diffusing my fear group. They are still the most intriguing, but

do I want to develop closeness with them, who knows.
- Of all the groups D found most of his attention directed towards the group of individuals he felt fearful of. D questions whether he wants to develop closeness with these people.

What's the next step now that everyone's in their slot what about being personal? Do I want to expend the energy? Is it worth it? Can I do it? With whom?
- D questions his motivation in being personal.

Generally my response is that I've got lots to do. I reserve my personal time for A. For the rest, I have very few connections that I try to maintain. With most people I don't bother. How can I bother? I meet new people every day. My fantasy is that I want to diffuse all of them. Or be friends with all of them. There's not enough time and I've not enough energy. So that's become my pattern out here. Most people I won't get very close to. Most of my time I'll spend in my own world. And that feels mostly ok. The other reason for not getting personal is "Why should I? What's in it for me? Why waste my time?"
- D is wonders whether the amount of effort it takes to be personal is worth it.

I have no role models nor experience showing me that being personal is a useful way to spend time. Actually I do have one model and that is A. I have experience that it is worth working to be close only as much as we have worked to be close. I do not have experience it is worth working more to be closer. This impacts on my interaction with A. We both seem to be at a place that is comfortably close. Neither of us is working harder to be closer. It is not in our experience that this would be a useful thing to do, although theoretically we both know that it would be. Therefore my past experience with being personal defines how much I am willing to be personal, how personal I have to be to feel comfortable, etc.
- D does not see how it is possible or why he would move beyond his past experiences of being personal.

Giorgi's Method - Co-researcher G

In the second protocol again you are asked to first read G's statement for your own understanding and then read the writer's statement. The purpose of this procedure is to notice how the writer reflects, empathizes and brings understanding to what is meant by G's original statements. The method suggests that you read each statement both for what is said and for what is meant.

> Being personal is layered like an onion. As I release/express a top layer, another layer -insights-revealed to me. Unless I put out the top layer, rather than holding onto it (keeping it to myself) what is underneath is not revealed to me or the other and our communication stays superficial.
> - G believes that she can be more personal if she reveals what is beneath the superficial layer of her relating.
>
> My ability and willingness to be personal determines how intimate and connected I can/will be with myself and others. It determines the quality of my life.
> - G feels that the quality of her life is influenced to the extent that she experiences intimacy and connectedness with herself and with others.
>
> Every human has the desire to be personal, but being personal is frightening and risky at times.
> - G experiences the common human need for personal contact and yet is aware of her fear and the risk involved.
>
> It is possible to learn how to be more personal, to become conscious of it -- one of the most important factors is to learn to become present, stay present and be curious about the other as well as the self.
> - G believes that being personal can be learned by being curious and present.
>
> When people give facts and information about a variety of things, but little information about themselves, I lose interest and drift. I find this kind of relating dull and uninteresting. I get bored quickly with the impersonal, both with myself and others, even though at times I would rather withdraw than stay present and personal.
> - G loses interest and tends to withdraw when others reveal little about themselves.
>
> I realize, usually in retrospect, that I have missed personal contact with the other. I have been mostly

with myself, with the other as a mirror rather than seeing the other person. At times it appears I am merely waiting to begin talking again, formulating what I will say next rather than listening.
- G is aware that she when attends to herself rather to the other she misses personal contact.

Or I am "pushing" for personal contact, trying to be personal for the sake of being personal, rather than simply being interested in the other and/or wanting to share who I am. I get stuck. Being personal can't be pushed, must just happen.
- G sees that trying to make personal contact by forcing the situation doesn't work either.

I feel awkward, blocked in getting to know certain people better. I feel impotent, stuck when I think I want to be more personal but can't seem to shift to a personal level with them.
- G would like to know certain individuals but feels unable to relate personally with them.

With people close to me, this frustration feels like cold fear. I need to reach this person, can't! Why not? I'm frozen, fear immobilizes me.
- G feels incapacitated with fear when wanting to be personal with people she feels close to.

What am I doing wrong? Somehow blame enters - usually turned inward. Why do I feel so desperate for contact, so inadequate at achieving it?
- G is aware of how she turns her frustration towards herself and becomes self-critical.

I am unable to get my feelings into words and can't understand why it is so difficult to be clear. I start to blather and somehow the degree of "blathering" seems related to the energy behind my feelings. The stronger I feel the more I blather, then get lost in frustration with myself.
- G would like to be able to express her feelings more clearly but the more she feels the more confused her expression becomes.

At times this deep sense of frustration is overwhelming. I am giving forth of infomation, I want/need feedback, don't get it and can't understand why. The more frustrated I feel with no response the more I press on, constantly rephrasing my confusion which in turn causes me to speed up even more.
- G becomes overwhelmed by her frustration and in turn

tries even harder to make contact.

At these times, when I am feeling "inadequate", it seems safer to stay impersonal.
- G's feelings of inadequacy in being personal cause her to consider the safety and security of impersonal relating.

I realize how much of myself I withhold through my own judgments, assumptions of what others will think of me. I see how much I discount and stifle myself.
- G sees how she inhibits herself through her concern about how others might evaluate her.

If I am busy taking on judgements, getting into guilt and blame, I am missing seeing the other person. Not taking on the projections of the other if they don't fit or projecting myself (without awareness) on the other is the first step.
- G realizes that she is not in contact with the other when she either judging or being taken out by the judgements of others.

When I can identify, clarify for myself what is happening, I can let go of the need to defend, blame etc. I need to let go of my assumptions and imaginations and acknowledge what is.
- G recognizes the value in acknowledging what is rather than what is imagined or assumed.

For example, when he says "I don't trust you", I hear "You can't be trusted" and I then feel misunderstood, blame him and myself, get into being angry, wanting to defend and protect myself.
- G realizes that when she reacts defensively, she is hearing something different from what has been said.

My experience of myself is that I can be trusted. How is it that he doesn't see me that way? I take it on; there is something wrong with me. I can choose to feel hurt and rejected; he doesn't care about me, etc.
- G takes the other's statement and turns it against herself, feels hurt and uncared for.

When I am not getting what I want, I feel a need to withdraw, to protect myself there is a masking process between this and anger. I withdraw, move into my need to pull back, protect myself by saying to myself, "I don't care, I can get along fine by myself". I get angry and defiant.
- G withdraws and witholds her hurt and anger.

In being personal, I can express my desire to get to know him, to allow myself to express my caring for him - to see and be seen by him. I have not acknowledged his statement, heard what he is telling me about himself. This is his experience of mistrust. I cannot change his experience. I want him to trust me. I judge that he can trust me. But the fact is that in this moment he is sharing that he does not. Is it that he has an issue with trust and he is projecting that onto me? If I can get past my blame of myself and him, I could see him and express who I am. Instead of defending myself, not hearing him, and not acknowledging our separate experiences, I can become curious. What is his experience, how does that feel for him?
- G, by acknowledging his statement, focuses her attention towards understanding his experience rather than getting lost in her own reactions.

What is my experience, how am I feeling? What are my options in responding to this moment - to express myself or to understand him? One option is be personal is to be there for him, to understand his space.
- G sees that she has choice to respond by understanding his experience or to express her own reactions to what he is saying.

I need to see him more clearly, to appreciate our differences without threat, need or desire to change or alter his behavior or point of view.
- G sees the value in acknowledging their differences without wanting the other to see things in exactly the same way.

How easy it is to forget what we both want from each other is acceptance, compassion and understanding - a longing to be seen, a longing to be acknowledged. We both share that commmon fundamental need to be personal and to be with someone who is personal with us.
- G unveils the underlying needs that they both share as human beings for intimate personal contact.

Expressing my experience of his comment is equally important to understanding his experience. I see that for me I cannot go beyond a certain level of being personal without "clearing" my perceptions and processing my judgments of the situation. The act of clearing opens up possibilities of becoming more personal. Being personal is a result of me being

myself with him and seeing him for who he is.
- G suggests that being personal involves both seeing the other for who he is and being herself through expressing her perceptions and judgments.

It is also terrifying because I get into my self-doubt and self judgments - this isn't interesting, this is petty, this isn't well-expressed, etc. The dilemna is that I want to move to intimacy with this person who is important to me but I'm scared. I have an investment of caring about him, of valuing him. The more I care, the larger the investment I have in wanting connection and contact, the more I want to be liked, approved of by him.
- G reveals how she is caught between wanting personal contact, approval and acceptance and fearing that she will be judged (rejected).

To move to a deeper level of intimacy, I feel I have to let go, express my judgments, hear what his are. I then fear that when I do express myself that he will take offence. In the act of wanting to be closer, I will actually drive him away. I will be honest about who I am, but who I am is sometimes petty, unattactive hard to be with, and unseeing of the other. I will then lose this person that is so important to me.
- G fears that as she reveals who she really is that she will lose this person who is important to her.

My gateway to myself is my ability, my willingness to be personal with others. Relatedness is my pathway, to be at one with myself and therefore at one with the universe.
- G views the process of being personal as a door to understanding herself.

So much of my life I have spent convincing myself of my "independence" - "I don't need anybody else", "I can make it on my own". I have proved it over and over again.
- G reflects on how she has proved her independence and self-reliance time and time again.

Yet what is this emptiness I feel? Now I recognize that I have proved I can make it on and I no longer have a need to prove it.
- G questions her feelings of emptiness.

Is my capacity in "being alone against the world" a sign of my competence in my aloneness or incompetence in relationship? I wonder if I can make it with

another, whether I can really connect. My quest is for connection. I want to connect.
- G wonders whether she will ever make the type of connection she longs for.

I realize that in those exchanges where I have felt connected, the recognition of the other and the absence of a major power exchange have been the key. Even in relationships, where power struggle is there, the real intimate moments have been when the power struggle has been minimized, put on the back burner. The need to be acknowledged/seen and to acknowledge/see the other has been a priority.
- G sees that the really intimate moments with others have occured when she has been acknowledged and in turn has recognized them.

Underneath my need to take care of can often be my need to control. I have to be honest with my need to control by checking out my intentions. Am I feeling love, caring and wanting to express that or am I feeling a need to control, stemming from my own fear of being rejected, abandoned?
- G is aware of how she can use her caring as a way of contolling the other and reducing her fear of rejection.

The act of being personal requires a definition of boundaries. When operating within a role, no sense of self is required. The role provides the boundaries. To be personal I must define and share myself. When in role this is neither possible or expected.
- G suggests that when she is in a role she need not define or share her personal self.

I remember the importance of title in the business world. The strong need to define your role and to have your role defined for others, so you don't have to reveal yourself. Roles and titles take away the need to be personal; they replace the need to be personal. The title "precedes the person". My business card said "Branch Manager" so I did not personally have to "earn the right" or "authority" of my positon. I would just present my card or state my title and automatically there were expectations from myself and others on how I should be.
- G reflects on her experience in business where her boundaries were defined by role and title.

I was skilled at staying in role and spending a considerable part of my career life relating in an impersonal way. Yet I attribute part of my success to my ability to connect personally with people.
- G recognizes how connecting personally assisted her in her work world.

I find that it is easier to be personal with people I have little investment in. I can delude myself into thinking I am being intimate.
- G notices that it is easy to be personal with people who she has little emotional attachment to.

It was also very limiting, in that being personal could "blow my cover", upset the status quo. Being personal could actually be dangerous and threatening to others who did not want to deal with me in any way other than my role. The vulnerabilty of being personal can be frightening not only to me but even more so to others.
- G recognizes that being personal can be very disruptive if done indiscriminately.

My pattern has been to conceal as much as possible. My fear of being seen as a nerd contributes to the amount, energy I spend concealing. In my commitment to put out the real me, the petty, nerdy stuff keeps surfacing.
- G spends a fair amount of energy hiding certain parts of herself that she judges as "nerdy" yet these personal characteristics keep resurfacing.

The consequences are what I feared they would be. He withdraws, sees me as petty, as a nerd who is difficult to be with. My expectations are being fulfilled - am I sabotaging myself?
- G recognizes the self-fulfilling nature of her fear of revealing who she really is.

My hurt comes from my experience of not being acknowledged for who I am - what I have to offer of myself is being rejected, is not good enough. I have a fear that it won't be good enough. I won't get it right. My focus is on how I look/come across. My fear is that I am being blamed for not meeting his ideal. I feel those things I value in myself are not being seen or recognized. I feel willing to open myself up, bare my guts, then when I do I am rejected. I have enough self-hatred and paranoia that I don't need to take on other people's judgments.

- G is afraid that who she is won't measure up and that when she opens up she will be rejected.

If I am feeling stamped on, why do I go back for more? Why don't I seek a person or a place where I am valued? Answer! Unless I value myself no such place/person exists.
- G sees that she needs to first be accepting of herself before she can feel valued by others.

I am watchful because I have had experiences of "openning up" to people and revealing information where it has proven to be in poor judgment. I have pushed aside my intuitions which have told me to "hold back" or "be more cautious" and now realize that I have to be more discriminating in developing relationships.
- G recalls situations where being open has not been useful and realizes that she needs to trust her intuitions in being more discriminating.

I have had expectations - how I wanted to feel when I was with him and how I wanted him to be with me so I could feel safe and warm and loved. He is the only one I haven't allowed to be who he is - pedestal stuff, lover stuff.
- G sees how her expectations have separated her from him.

I judge that I am putting out who I am and feel frustrated and isolated (hurt) that he is not reciprocating. What I judge as personal can be very different for him. There is a permission factor to being personal. It seems that it is like sex: it must be between "consenting" people otherwise it can actually be threatening, intrusive of another's privacy, safety. Without checking out the other's interest, investment, commitment, am I seen as aggressing and violating their privacy? I need to remember to check how open they are to receiving me before barging in.
- G realizes that she must be sensitive to the other by checking out their agreements about what being personal means to each of them.

I have generally avoided contact all together with my strongest attractions. I go "nerdy" - very adolescent feeling. It's like a deferral of who I am to them, a letting go of my power, my own ground, my significance in their presence. I want to be approved of, worthy of his attention somehow. Placing him on a pedestal

carries with it expectations of myself and how I should be in addition to expectations of him and how ideally he should be in order for me to justify my pedestal placing.
- G avoids her strong sexual attractions because she tends to place herself one down from the other.

I think about sexually opening up after so long, letting go, exposing, investing and then having that withheld or taken away.
- G feels hurt in having opened up sexually and then having experienced rejection.

My anger and resentment are somehow connected with my resistance to seeing the reality of what he is telling me, and to me seeing who he really is.
- G recognizes that part of her anger has to do with her not being willing to accept the reality of the situation.

Emerging Patterns - Cluster Method - Co-researcher D

An empathic presence was established in order to formulate meanings from the succinct descriptions by using Giorgi's method. I proceeded to cluster these meanings into themes and patterns. Recurrent themes such as "fear", "judgements", "self-affirmation", "authenticity", "withholding" and "choice" began to emerge in a way that illuminated the central features of the phenomenon. The patterns which emerged provided an ordered framework for describing the data. The three patterns surfaced from the ebb and flow quality implicit in the descriptions of the process of relating. There seemed to be a knowing of what it is like to be personal, an awareness of inhibiting forces and sense of conflict between the two.

The patterns of being personal for co-researcher D can be viewed from three distinct perspectives: 1) What stops one from being personal; 2) What it is like to be personal; and 3) What is the struggle to be personal. The following is a list of themes with illustrative examples which tend to emerge into these three patterns.

In assisting readers in following the research process, it is suggested that they read the entire description to get a sense of the whole of what it is like to be personal for each of the co-researchers. In reading the following descriptions, it is recommended that the reader remains open to the experience of the life-world of these two people. The reader should try to determine what the meaning of being personal is as expressed by each cluster of statements. In noticing what is evoked as readers examine each protocol, an attempt should be made to differentiate their own assumptions and interpretations of what is said from what the co-researchers are actually saying about their own experience (this is the ongoing process of bracketing).

Pattern I: What stops you from being personal?

Fear. I am afraid to let myself be known. In my attempts to be personal I am filled with fear. I find it difficult to move to another level of relating. I try to move out and make the connection when I want to be personal and I want to share something. I guess what really stops me is what stops me all the time: I'm afraid to be as open as I might want to be. What feels risky or scary for me may not feel that way for you. I may feel that I am being open and yet for you being open would mean something very different.

Judgments. I can intellectualize by saying that these are my issues but to accept them and talk about them comfortably is very difficult. I haven't really accepted them as part of me so there are always blocks, ways of trying to prevent people from getting in. I judge people as too intellectual, too superficial or I objectify them by putting them up on a pedestal. I act as if the perception is reality and separate myself from people by putting myself down or by feeling superior to them.

Feeling Betrayed. It's got to do with fear, with people knowing me or of someone knowing something about me that I don't know about myself. In being open the vulnerable part is telling you about my fears. The stuff that I feel vulnerable about is the stuff that you could use to attack or hurt me. It would be some power you have over me, something you could say or do to really hurt. Like being betrayed, I trust and end up getting hurt. It's like an exchange of goods; if I don't have anything on you then I'm wary.

Put-downs. It's kind of like that in my relationship with K. I'm quite scared of K maybe because I have a sense of her as knowing a lot. I feel very open and raw in front of her. I always feel like I'm going to her defended, a bit subordinate.
But on the other hand I'm really attracted to her not really sexually but exactly for those things I feel charged about.
These are situations I usually back off of. I'm really defended, she does all the talking, I want to say more but I figure she's got more to say, I really put myself down in relationship to her, I've got nothing to say that's of value.

Feeling Rejected. I want to be personal with her more than anybody here and am more afraid of it with her than anybody else here. I have the idea she is going to reject much more out of hand, much more easily than anyone else here would. I'm embarassed; I think she'll think I'm stupid and won't have anything to do with me.

In the case of D, he describes his struggle to be personal in his relating with others. "Needing desperately to be open and connecting with others" yet "hesitant to open" himself up to do this, he wants to be able to be himself "without guard", to find a way of getting through or getting out of the way the stuff that stops him in relating with others. Being personal is not something he finds that he can do easily. He fears people knowing him or knowing something about him that he doesn't know about himself. Part of this comes from the feeling that he keeps himself "so tightly under wraps" that he doesn't really know himself. Another part comes from the fear that others will use his vulnerability to "attack" or "betray" him. If he were open to people they would then have "some power over him, something they could say or do to really hurt" him.

The emerging themes of fear, hurt, judgment, betrayal, put-downs and rejection begin to surface as ways (remembered experiences) in which he stops himself from being personal. The imagined catastrophic expectations of re-occurences of past experiences or anticipated reactions tend to inhibit his willingness and ability to be personal and open in his relating.

Pattern II: What is it like to be personal?

Self-affirming. I know there are certain payoffs that I highly value but it's work to do it and I can't just move with it. It's a sense of belonging, an affirmation of self.

Authentic Core. It's feeling alive, feeling integrated. There is something about connecting with a person that is affirming to my life, something at my core.

Comfort. I have the experience that it is worth working to be close only as much as we have worked to be close. I do not have the experience it is worth working more to be closer. This impacts on my interaction with A. We both seem to be at a place that is comfortably close. Neither of us is working harder to be closer. It is not in our experience that this would be a useful thing to do, although theoretically we both know that it would be. Therefore my past experience with being personal defines how much I am willing to be personal, how personal I have to be to feel comfortable, etc.

Openness and Sharing. I want to able to be myself without guard. And even when I feel guarded, finding a way of getting through or getting out of the way the stuff that stops me from being myself in my relations with others. It is not something I find I do very easily; a lot of stuff gets in the way.

Knowing Self. They say "be yourself as fully as you can" and that really makes sense to me yet I really don't know who "my self" is. I keep it so tightly under wraps. The more I am open, more openess becomes a part of who I am. The more I withhold, the more I contain myself; the less I express myself, the more I become disconnected from myself.

Expressing Self. I need to initiate the possibility of being personal by sharing more, by disclosing my judgments, by being willing to open myself to people.

Understanding the Other. With A if I can be loving with some understanding of where she's at I can be open to being there for her even though she's going through this stuff. And if I can't or if I'm not open to it then we just flare up and end up in a big fight.

Needs From Others. So I could say that what you're doing or could do is what's stopping me from being personal. What I would need in order to feel safe and move out and feel comfortable is for you to fit what I would consider to be a safe person. Someone who is able to take what I am saying at a gut level, who is accepting of me. If I felt accepted by you maybe this other stuff wouldn't matter at all; maybe the base of feeling accepted is all I need. I lay a whole bunch of expectations at your feet and say if you want to be personal with me this is how you do it.

In relating personally to others D knows "there are certain payoffs that he values highly". He finds that it is "worth working to be close" to develop a "sense of belonging" by "connecting with a person". There is "something affirming to my life, something at my core", "an affirmation of self" that happens when he relates openly with another person. He finds that the more he is open, the more he comes to know another part of who he is. "Being personal by sharing more, by disclosing my judgments, by being willing to open to people" is a way of feeling alive and integrated.

The themes which are emerging under the pattern of "what it is like to be personal" are self-affirmation, authenticity, comfort, openness and sharing, self-expression, need for acceptance, understanding, and self-knowing.

Pattern III: What is the Struggle to be Personal?

Withholding. I know I'm sitting on a lot because I know there are parts of myself that I just don't bring forward at all. I keep so much under wraps and that really stiffles me and stops me from really meeting people. What I tend to do is often just sit back and listen or ask questions rather than put out what's happening with me.

Choice. It's a choice to be personal, sometimes conscious and sometimes not. I can see that it's possible to be personal with most of the people here.

Objectifying the Other. And as I think about it, a number of my female friends are very much like her - intelligent and self-assured. It's got something to do with conquering, with going out and conquering this person. I know how to move towards the conquest. I see the challenge of winning the person over or whatever it is that makes me feel challenged by that person. But once the challange is completed, what happens then? How do I maintain a relationship once the person is won over? What often happens once I've found that I can move beyond the objectification of the person and the challenge of the conquest is that I end up losing interest and leaving the relationship.

Taking Too Much Effort. But I'd rather spend my time doing something else rather than spending my time trying to get to someone with whom my connections aren't really that good.

A Matter of Priorities. Or if I've had a misunderstanding with someone is it really worth it to clear it up? It might take an hour or a couple of hours to talk it through and right now I'm saying no. I guess it's a matter of priorities.

Avoiding Conflict. I don't move towards resolution of my conflicts in my relation with A. I accept a lot of uncertainty. The way I dissipate conflicts is move through a state of anger to a stage of wanting to get back together and be close. We do that physically without the anger being resolved and I think that happens for us by coming together sexually. It's great foreplay, but the anger doesn't get resolved. We just set the issues aside and kind of pretend that everything is ok again.

Discomfort. I have a strong discomfort when I don't know where I sit with someone. Here I was dropped into a setting where I didn't know anyone hardly and was supposed to interact with them. This was for me very anxiety-provoking. My first task became to sort out my boundaries with each of the people here. I felt uncomfortable around them and needed to know where they were at in order to relax with them.

Questioning Motivation. What's the next step now that everyone's in their slot? What about being personal? Do I want to expend the energy? Is it worth it? Can I do it? With whom?

Why Bother? Generally my response is that I've got lots to do. I reserve my personal time for A. For the rest, I have very few connections that I try to maintain. With most people I don't bother. How can I bother? I meet new people every day. My fantasy is that I want to conquer (defuse) all of them. Or be friends with all of them. There's not enough time and I've not enough energy. So that's become my pattern out here. Most people I won't get very close to. Most of my time I'll spend in my own world. And that feels mostly ok. The other reason for not getting personal is "why should I?" What's in it for me? Why waste my time?

In the everyday reality of D's relating at a personal level he sees that there is always a choice to either bring himself forward to make a connection or to sit back and keep himself under wraps. It's a matter of priorities, and often being personal is just too much effort. He also indicates that he would rather diffuse or avoid conflict than openly address and resolve the issues at hand. He sees that by spending most of his time in his own world he is not getting very close to most people and that's ok with him. When he does come forward he sees it as a challenge or a conquest but ends up losing interest. He questions his reasons for being personal: "What's in it for me?" "Why should I?" "Why waste my time?"

"I have the experience that it is worth working to be close only as much as we have worked to be close. I do not have the experience that it is worth working more to be closer." His lack of "role models" and "experience showing" him "that being personal is a useful way to spend time" illustrates how his history influences the extent of his relating.

The emerging themes which underlie the pattern of "to be or not to be personal" deal with the typical ways he withholds, chooses his priorities, avoids conflict, questions his motivation and objectifies others as a conquest.

Emerging Patterns - Cluster Method - Co-researcher G

The patterns of being personal for co-researcher G can be viewed from three distinct perspectives: What stops her from being personal, what it is like for her to be personal, and what is her struggle to be personal. The following is a list of illustrative examples which tend to fall into these three patterns.

Pattern I: What stops you from being personal?

Being Impersonal. When people give facts and information about a variety of things, but little information about themselves, I lose interest and drift. I find this kind of relating dull and uninteresting. I get bored quickly with being impersonal, both with myself and others, even though at times I would rather withdraw than stay present and be personal.

Judgments. I realize how much of myself I withhold through my own judgments, assumptions of what others will think of me. I see how much I discount and stifle myself. If I am busy taking on judgements, getting into guilt and blame, I am missing seeing the other person. Not taking on the projections of the other if they don't fit or projecting myself (without awareness) on the other is the first step.

When I can identify, clarify for myself what is happening, I can let go of the need to defend, blame, etc. I need to let go of my assumptions and imaginations and acknowledge what is. For example, when he says "I don't trust you", I hear "you can't be trusted". I then feel misunderstood, blame him and myself, get into being angry, wanting to defend and protect myself. My experience of myself is that I can be trusted. How is it that he doesn't see me that way? I take it on; there is something wrong with me. I can choose to feel hurt and rejected; he doesn't care about me, etc., etc. When I am not getting what I want, I feel a need to withdraw, to protect myself - there is a masking process between this and anger. I withdraw, move into my need to pull back, protect myself by saying to myself, "I don't care; I can get along fine by myself". I get angry and defiant.

In being personal, I can express my desire to get to know him, to allow myself to express my caring for him - to see and be seen by him. I have not acknowledged his statement, heard what he is telling me about himself. This is his experience of mistrust. I cannot change his experience. I want him to trust me. I judge that he can trust me. But the fact is that in this moment he is sharing that he does not. Is it that he has an issue with trust and he is projecting that onto me? If I can get past my blame of myself and him, I could see him and express who I am.

Instead of defending myself, not hearing him, and not acknowledging our separate experiences, I can become curious. What is his experience, how does that feel for him? What is my experience, how am I feeling? What are my options in responding to this moment - to express myself or to understand him? One option is be personal, be there for him, understand his space. I need to see him more clearly, to appreciate our differences without threat, need or desire to change or alter his behavior or point of view.

How easy it is to forget what we both want from each other is acceptance, compassion and understanding - a longing to be seen, a longing to be acknowledged. We both share that commmon fundamental need to be personal and to be with someone who is personal with us.

Expressing my experience of his comment is equally important to understanding his experience. I see that for me I cannot go beyond a certain level of being personal without "clearing" my perceptions and processing my judgments of the situation. The act of clearing opens up possibilities of becoming more personal. Being personal is a result of me being myself with him and seeing him for who he is.

It is also terrifying because I get into my self-doubt and self-judgments - this isn't interesting, this is petty, this isn't well expressed, etc. The dilemna is that I want to move to intimacy with this person who is important to me but I'm scared. I have an investment of caring about him, of valuing him. The more I care, the larger the investment I have in wanting connection and contact, the more I want to be liked, approved of by him. To move to a deeper level of intimacy, I feel I have to let go, express my judgments, hear what his are of me. I then fear that when I do express myself that he will take offence. In the act of wanting to be closer, I will actually drive him away. I will be honest about who I am, but who I am is sometimes petty, unattactive, hard to be with, and unseeing of the other. I will then lose this person who is so important to me.

Boundaries. The act of being personal requires a definition of boundaries. When operating within a role, no sense of self is required. The role provides the boundaries. To be personal I must define and share myself. When in role this is neither possible or expected.

I remember the importance of title in the business world. The strong need to define your role and to have your role defined for others, so you don't have to reveal yourself. Role titles take away the need to be personal; they replace the need to be personal. The title "precedes the person". My business card said "Branch Manager" so I did not personally have to "earn the right" or "authority" of my position. I would just present my card or state my title and automatically there were expectations from myself and others on how I should be.

I was skilled at staying in role and spending a considerable part of my career life relating in an impersonal way. Yet I attribute part of my success to my ability to connect personally with people. I find that it is easier to be personal with people I have little investment in. I can delude myself into thinking I am being intimate.

It was also very limiting, in that being personal could "blow my cover", upset the status quo. Being personal could actually be dangerous and threatening to others who did not want to deal with me in any way other than my role. The vulnerability of being personal can be frightening not only to me but even more so to others.

Fear. My pattern has been to conceal as much as possible. My fear of being seen as a nerd contributes to the amount of energy I spend concealing. In my commitment to put out the real me, the petty, nerdy stuff keeps surfacing.

The consequences are what I feared they would be. He withdraws, sees me as petty, as a nerd who is difficult to be with. My expectations are being fulfilled - am I sabatoging myself?

My hurt comes from my experience of not being acknowledged for who I am - what I have to offer of myself is being rejected, is not good enough. I have a fear that it won't be good enough. I won't get it right. My focus is on how I look/come across. My fear is that I am being blamed for not meeting his ideal. I feel those things I value in myself are not being seen or recognized. I feel willing to open myself up, bare my guts; then when I do I am rejected. I have enough self-hatred and paranoia that I don't need to take on other people's judgments.

If I am feeling stamped on, why do I go back for more? Why don't I seek a person or a place where I am valued? Answer! Unless I value myself no such place/person exists.

Caution. I am watchful because I have had experiences of "opening up" to people and revealing information where it has proven to be in poor judgment. I have pushed aside my intuitions which have told me to "hold back" or "be more cautious" and now realize that I have to be more discriminating in developing relationships. I feel unsafe unless the other person is willing also to be curious about me, to share their thoughts and feelings with me, to reveal and allow me to see some of who they are. My assumption is that they will share my way of being personal. My assumptions are not always accurate so I have to be clear what my intentions are and how direct I am being. Am I projecting my own interpretation of being personal on them, judging them to not be personal by my standards when they consider they are being personal by theirs?

I have had expectations - how I wanted to feel when I was with him and how I wanted him to be with me so I could feel safe and warm and loved. He is the only one I haven't allowed to be who he is - pedestal stuff, lover stuff. I judge that I am putting out who I am and feel frustrated and isolated (hurt) that he is not reciprocating. What I judge as personal can be very different for him. There is a permission factor to being personal. It seems that it is like sex: it must be between "consenting" people; otherwise it can actually be threatening, intrusive of another's privacy, safety. Without checking out the other's interest, investment, commitment, am I seen as aggressing and violating their privacy? I need to remember to check how open they are to receiving me before barging in.

What stops G from being personal varies in the different contexts and intensity of her relations with others. With friends and acquaintances, G finds that when they give "little information about themselves" that she loses "interest and drifts", she gets "bored quickly with being impersonal, both with herself and others" and "at times would rather withdraw than stay present and be personal". In the work world she recalls how her role title took away the "need to be personal" and how "the title precedes the person". She finds it easier "to be personal with people she has little investment in" and feels that she can "delude herself into thinking she is being intimate".

In relation to those people in whom she is more "invested" she stifles and discounts herself through her "own judgments, assumptions of what others will think" of her. By "taking on judgments, getting into guilt and blame", she sees that she is "missing seeing the other". She wants to "move to intimacy" but is scared. The more she cares, "the larger the investment she has in wanting connection and contact, the more she wants to be liked and approved of". She fears that she will be honest about who she is and will "actually drive him away". She fears that she "won't be good enough", that she "won't meet his ideal" and that she "will be rejected". She sees that she needs to be "more discriminating" in developing relationships, in "openning up" to people. At times she has "pushed aside her intuitions" and revealed information "where it has proven to be in poor judgment". She has become watchful and cautious.

Pattern II: What is it like to be personal?

Being personal is layered like an onion. As I release/express a top layer, another layer -insights- is revealed to me. Unless I put out the top layer, rather than holding onto it (keeping it to myself), what is underneath is not revealed to me or the other and our communication stays superficial.

My ability and willingness to be personal determines how intimate and connected I can/will be with myself and others. It determines the quality of my life. Every human has the desire to be personal, but being personal is frightening and risky at times. It is possible to learn how to be more personal, to become conscious of it -- one of the most important factors is to learn to become present, stay present and be curious about the other as well as the self.

- I feel open and less in need of defense
- I'm revealing who I am, with or in spite of my judgments or censoring
- I'm putting out info about myself in order to get feedback
  to learn or at times to be reassured
- I am spontaneous, present, curious about myself and the other
- I become forthcoming with info about my thoughts and feelings, my point of view
- My awareness shifts; exterior distractions drop away
- My body relaxes as I become less self-conscious
- In retrospect I remember more about my energy than I do about the precise words (feelings: hurt, joy, sadness, anger, fear, etc.)
- I feel at ease and less contolled, my thought processes slow, my mind seems more peaceful, I express myself more clearly, I censor myself less, I feel more grounded
- I feel stimulated, more alive through revealing which can at times be freeing or at times shameful
- It's risky and I'm more vulnerable to criticism or rejection, although in actual experience a bond and a mutual respect result which make that less likely to happen
- I feel a sense of loyalty to those who have been personal with me, a caring, whether I like what they've said or not
- I experience eye contact, and a deeper "sensing" of the other person's energy tends to increase.

~~I~~ realize that in those exchanges where I have felt most connected, the recognition of the other and the absence of a major power exchange have been the key. Even in relationships, where power struggle is there, the real intimate moments have been when the power struggle has been minimized, put on the back burner. The need to be acknowledged/seen and to acknowledge/see the other has been a priority.

Underneath my need to take care of can often be my need to control. I have to be honest with my need to control by checking out my intentions. Am I feeling love, caring and wanting to express that or am I feeling a need to control stemming from my own fear of being rejected, abandoned?

In relating with others, G knows that her "willingness and ability to be personal determines how intimate and connected" she can be with herself and others. "It determines the quality of my life". She feels more "alive", "at ease", "grounded", and her "body relaxes" as she becomes "less self-conscious. She finds that for her the "real intimate moments have been when the power struggle has been put on the back burner", when "the need to be acknowledged/seen and to acknowledge/see the other has been a priority". In being personal she feels at risk, "more vulnerable to criticism or rejection, although in actual experience a bond and a mutual respect results". She realizes that she feels "a sense of loyalty to those who have been personal with me, a caring, whether I like what they've said or not".

Pattern III: What is the struggle to be personal?

Missing Contact. I realize, usually in retrospect, that I have missed personal contact with the other. I have been mostly with myself, with the other as a mirror rather than seeing the other person. At times it appears I am merely waiting to begin talking again, formulating what I will say next rather than listening. Or I am "pushing" for personal contact, trying to be personal for the sake of being personal, rather than simply being interested in the other and/or wanting to share who I am. I get stuck. Being personal can't be pushed, must just happen.

Difficulty. I feel awkward, blocked in getting to know certain people better. I feel impotent, stuck when I think I want to be more personal but can't seem to shift to a personal level with them. With people close to me, this frustration feels like cold fear. I need to reach this person, can't! Why not? I'm frozen, fear immobilizes me. What am I doing wrong? Somehow blame enters -- usually turned inward. Why do I feel so desperate for contact, so inadequate at achieving it?

I am unable to get my feelings into words and can't understand why it is so difficult to be clear. I start to blather and somehow the degree of "blathering" seems related to the energy behind my feelings. The stronger I feel, the more I blather, then get lost in frustration with myself.
At times this deep sense of frustration is overwhelming. I am giving forth of information, I want/need feedback, don't get it and can't understand why. The more frustrated I feel with no response, the more I press on, constantly rephrasing my confusion which in turn causes me to speed up even more.
At these times, when I am feeling "inadequate", it seems safer to stay impersonal.

Relatedness. My gateway to myself is my ability, my willingness to be personal with others. Relatedness is my pathway, to be at one with myself, therefore at one with the universe.

So much of my life I have spent convincing myself of my "independence" - "I don't need anybody else" , "I can make it on my own". I have proved it over and over again. Yet what is this emptiness I feel? Now that I recognize I have proved that I can make it on my own, I no longer have a need to prove it. Is my capacity in "being alone against the world" a sign of my competence in my aloneness or incompetence in relationship? I wonder if I can make it with another, whether I can really connect. My quest is for connection. I want to connect.

Sexual Attraction. I have generally avoided contact all together with my strongest attractions. I go "nerdy" - very adolescent feeling. It's like a deferral of who I am to them, a letting go of my power, my own ground, my significance in their presence. I want to be approved of, worthy of his attention somehow. Placing him on a pedestal carries with it expectations of myself and how I should be in addition to expectations of him and how ideally he should be in order for me to justify my pedestal placing.

Sexuality. I think about sexually opening up after so long, letting go, exposing, investing and then having that withheld or taken away. My anger and resentment are somehow connected with my resistance to seeing the reality of what he is telling me, and to me seeing who he really is.

G realizes how she misses contact with others by

"formulating what I am going to say next rather than listening", by being mostly with herself, or by "pushing for personal contact, rather than simply being interested in the other and/or wanting to share who she is". With people she feels close to, she is frustrated. She feels so desperate in her need for contact and inadequate in achieving it. She feels unable to get her feelings clearly into words and gets lost in her own frustration and confusion.

She wants connection yet sees how much of her life has been spent convincing herself of her ability to be independent, to take care of herself. She wonders whether her "capacity in being alone against the world is a sign of her competence in her aloneness or incompetence in relationship". She is not sure whether she can make it with another.

D. Summary

This chapter illustrates a two step phenomenological approach to research, identifying both the process and the patterns of being personal. The aim was to systematically interrogate what the data reveals about the experience of being personal. The first intention was to find out what constitutes being personal through examining the co-researchers' descriptions (Giorgi's method). Secondly the emerging themes and patterns were presented to provide a sample of the transitions in meaning through which the researcher was progressing (Cluster method).

The methodological procedures of process-pattern illuminated in this chapter precede the discussion of structure. A synthesis and integration of the insights obtained from this chapter are contained in the following chapter which examines the deep structure of being personal. In the next chapter, identified themes of being personal are transformed into the language of psychological structure.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF EMERGING PATTERNS AND STRUCTURE

A. Introduction

I began to engage in the process of extracting the essential themes and patterns from the narratives. Themes merged into larger recognizable units called patterns. The themes and patterns which emerged from the protocols indicated that movement existed occurred as a relational ebb and flow. In this movement I noticed a "tendency" in the manner of moving as being toward, away from or against the other. These same structures seemed to be implicit in the dynamics of the co-researchers' experience of personal contact. Upon re-examining the themes and patterns in light of the movement/"tendency" of the phenomenon, I recognized the underlying structure of "intention". These two interrelated structures provide an arrangement, interrelationship and organization of the patterns of interpersonal relating which can help describe and reflect the characterisitics and organizing principles of being personal. Tendency herein refers to the inclination, predisposition, propensity or leaning one has toward another. Intention as used in the balance of this paper refers the purpose goal or aim which is underlying one's tendency in relation to another. For example, underlying the tendency to move toward is the intention to learn/understand while the intention to protect/defend underlies the tendency to move away from and the tendency to move against.

In the following three sections, examples taken from the protocols are presented which express the structure of being personal in terms of our tendency toward the other. The tendency to move away from is discussed in the context of four themes: fear, avoiding conflict, distancing and self-criticism. Each of these themes provide an essential characteristic of the tendency to move away from others. This discussion is then followed by sections on "moving against" and "moving towards" which are presented in similar format. It is through this framework that I will later discuss the underlying structures which represent the essential elements of personal relating. Although the actual sequencing of the lived-experience of being personal does not necessarily follow any particular order, much understanding can be gained by viewing these processes through the framework of its structures, as discussed in the final section of this chapter.

My perceptions and experience, real or imagined, tend to influence the nature of my movement in relations to the other. In the previous chapter, I view personal relating - what goes on between people - from the experiential perspective of the co-researchers. I am privy to the co-researchers' self-reflections and inner experienceing about their interactions with others. Their expressed views of self, other and their relationships provided me with insights into the essential structures of personal relating.

In face of this data, I again returned to my initial question, in an attempt to understand the process of developing intimacy: "What is it like to be personal?" The psychological structures of personal relating were examined from a framework of "tendencies" and "intentions".

I have chosen to write these three sections in the first person in order to speak more directly from the data. This style of presentation begins with my own self-understanding of what the data reveals in terms of structures and is supported by the co-researchers' own descriptions. My own self-understanding serves as a springboard from which to understand the underlying structures of being personal as described by the co-researchers. This "illustrative narrative" (See Appendix 3) comprises a composite of all of the co-researchers' descriptions combined with my own understanding, and is written in a form which is both personal and descriptive.

B. Moving Away From

The tendency too move away from is defined herein as the amount of contact (distance/closeness) I am willing to permit myself with another person. Distance is created through my own doubt about being accepted for many of our thoughts, feelings or desires. In creating distance I am often concerned that if we fail, show fear, or emotion no one will be there to support my vulnerablity. I set up imagined conditions for acceptance and then repress much of myself which I judge as being unacceptable to others. My fear is deeply rooted in my doubts about my adequacy, significance and likeability. My protection is to move away from the other.

1. Fear/witholding/withdrawing

When I feel threatened, I immediately and habitually find ways to defend myself against the impending pain. I feel a need to defend the self I think I am or would like to be. I create an image, mask, or facade so that others won't know who I really am. The loss of trust and the growth of fear often results in alienation, loneliness, and hostility. Fear stops the flow of my expression and directs my energies towards protecting myself from the perceived, anticipated, or imagined threats. Fear and mistrust escalate tensions with others and are self-fulfilling. As I become more protective of myself, I create more barriers and become more distant. This in turn raises defenses in others.

When I feel threatened, I immediately and habitually find ways to defend myself against the impending pain.

> I am afraid to let myself be known.
> In my attempts to be personal I am filled with fear.
> Fear, tightness, being closed.

I feel a need to defend the self I think I am or would like to be. I create an image, mask, or facade so that others won't know who I really am. When I am fearful my energy is focused on maintaining a safe distance from others by creating protective boundaries.

> My pattern has been to conceal as much as possible. My fear of being seen as a nerd contributes to the amount of energy I spend concealing. In my commitment to put out the real me, the petty, nerdy stuff keeps surfacing.

The loss of trust and the growth of fear often result in alienation, loneliness, and hostility. Fear stops the flow of my expression and directs my energies towards protecting myself from the perceived, anticipated, or imagined threats. Seeing the other as unfriendly or hostile, my feeling of inadequacy and insignificance increase.

> It's kind of like that in my relationship with K. I'm quite scared of K maybe because I have a sense of her as knowing a lot. I feel very open and raw in front of her. I always feel like I'm going to her defended, a bit subordinate. But on the other hand I'm really attracted to her, not really sexually but exactly for those things I feel charged about. These are situations

> I usually back off of. I'm really defended, she does all the talking, I want to say more but I figure she's got more to say, I really put myself down in relationship to her, I've got nothing to say that's of value.
> I want to be personal with her more than anybody here and am more afraid of it with her than anybody else here. I have the idea she is going to reject me out of hand, much more easily than anyone else here would. I'm embarassed; I think she'll think I'm stupid and won't have anything to do with me.

By withdrawing I protect myself from potential criticism, domination, or coercion that I anticipate from the other.

> When people give facts and information about a variety of things, but little information about themselves, I lose interest and drift. I find this kind of relating dull and uninteresting. I get bored quickly becoming impersonal, both with myself and others, even though at times I would rather withdraw than stay present and be personal.

It is the risk, the possibility of incurring misfortune or loss, possibility of danger, the apprehension of stepping into the unknown, which causes fear or alarm and results in me being timid and anxious.

> Every human has the desire to be personal, but being personal is frightening and risky at times.

I withdraw to reduce my discomfort and anxiety. In moving away from the other, I am protected from some of my feelings of uneasiness or tension caused by apprehension of possible misfortune or danger.

> I know I'm sitting on a lot cause I know there are parts of myself that I just don't bring forward at all; I keep so much under wraps and that really stiffles me and stops me from really meeting people. What I tend to do is often just sit back and listen or ask questions rather than put out what's happening with me.

As I hold back, restrain, inhibit, limit, or restrict myself by controlling or moderating my impulses, I maintain a level of comfort and safety.

When I feel I have something to hide, it follows that the other will be seen as a threat. They might pry into my secrets, or in an unguarded moment I might reveal my true self in its nakedness, thereby exposing my weakness and vulnerability. In order to protect myself from my fear of exposure I withdraw or resist the other sexually, emotionally, intellectually or physically.

> With people close to me, this frustration feels like cold fear. I need to reach this person, can't! Why not? I'm frozen; fear immobilizes me.

I can shut out the other by means of work, television, books, drugs/alcohol, illness, depression, fantasy, hobbies, etc. Through detachment and withdrawal, an emotional distance is created that insulates me from my pain even though it may result in alienation and isolation.

> When I am not getting what I want, I feel a need to withdraw, to protect myself - there is a masking between this and anger. I withdraw, move into my need to pull back, protect myself by saying to myself, "I don't care, I can get along fine by myself". I get angry and defiant.

In its extreme, I neither want to belong nor do I want to make the effort to contact others, but rather I choose to stay apart, feel little in common with others, feel that others do not understand me and therefore keep others at a safe distance. Fear and mistrust escalate tensions with others and become self-fulfilling. As I become more protective of myself, I create more barriers and become more distant. This in turn raises defenses in others.

2. Avoiding conflict

I seek to devise ways to attain a state of ease or well-being which will provide me with relief from affliction or grief. I seek comfort in a person who brings solace or ease, in situations that afford relaxation, physical comfort, security, predictability, assurance. I have learned to avoid conflict in order to maximize safety and security and minimize anxiety and insecurity.

My habitual patterns of behavior tend to lock me into an unconscious protective set of standard responses which limit my options. Although these patterns simplify my life situations so that I do not need to develop new responses for each new situation, they often are difficult to change. Developing new ways of coping with conflict is difficult, so rather than risk anxiety and uncertainty, I resort to habitual behaviors. I defend myself from uncertainty by choosing the comfort of the familiar even when the familiar may not be functional.

I tend to rationalize and justify my moving away from others as a choice and a matter of priorities.

> So much of my life I have spent convincing myself of my "independence" "I don't need anybody else" , "I can make it on my own". I have proved it over and over again.

The act of making up my mind as to the quantity and quality of the contact I want can either move me towards or away from others.

> It's a choice to be personal sometimes conscious and sometimes not. I can see that it's possible to be personal with most of the people here. But I'd rather spend my time doing something else rather than spend my time trying to get to someone with whom my connections aren't really that good. Or if I've had misunderstanding with someone is it really worth it to clear it up? It might take an hour or a couple of hours to talk it through and right now I'm saying no. I guess it's a matter of priorities.

I must often make choices among opposing feelings, thoughts or ways of behaving.

> My reasons for being personal are different according to group. I really spent a lot of time diffusing my fear group. They are still the most intriguing, but do I want to develop closeness with them. Who knows?

I have a tendency to move away when I want only what is positive and comfortable in my relating and am not accepting of the negative or uncomfortable aspects that go along with my choices. In face of contradictions, opposing forces, or conflicting values, I choose to move away in order to lessen my anxiety. This short-term relief from the stress of a given interpersonal situation often leaves me in a state of uncertainty in the context of my ongoing relating.

At times I become discouraged about my willingness and/or ability to relate. I begin questioning my need or desire to establish and maintain relations with others.

> What's the next step now that everyone's in their slot? What about being personal? Do I want to expend the energy? Is it worth it? Can I do it? With whom?

In this state of uncertainty, I am doubting the value of my personal relations and fail to see the incentive, payoff or reward.

> I know there are certain payoffs that I highly value but it's work to do it and I can't just move with it. It's a sense of belonging, an affirmation of self. It's feeling alive, feeling integrated. There is something about connecting with a person that is affirming to my life, something at my core.

I step back from my relating, become detached and objective. I see personal relating as too much effort, pain or trouble. If being with others is so disturbing, then why bother? In moments of despair I see all my efforts resulting only in hurt and pain at the expense of much of my physical, emotional, and mental energy.

I can protect myself from rejection and control by becoming indifferent, denying my vulnerability and convincing myself that I don't need or want anything from the other.

> If I am feeling stamped on, why do I go back for more? Why don't I seek a person or a place where I am valued? Answer! Unless I value myself no such place/person exists.

I want to be alone, become independent and avoid getting involved. Independence and the attitude of "I don't need anybody" can leave me with feelings of emptiness, loneliness, and alientation. Not to be involved, not to need anybody, not to allow others to influence or affect me is what I want when I feel most protective and isolated. From this negative perspective I choose to move away from others.

> Generally my response is that I've got lots to do. I reserve my personal time for A. For the rest, I have very few connections that I try to maintain. With people I don't bother. How can I bother? I meet new people every day. My fantasy is that I want to diffuse all of them. Or be friends with all of them. There's not enough time and I've not enough energy. So that's become my pattern out here. Most people I won't get very close to. Most of my time I'll spend in my own world. And that feels mostly ok. The other reason for not getting personal is "why should I?" What's in it for me? Why waste my time?

By avoiding conflict there is no attempt to address the situation and to discover my own or others' needs and concerns. I evade the other and leave before any resolution has been reached. I keep away from conflict in fearing that it might lead to disapproval or rejection.

> I don't move towards resolution of my conflicts in my relation with A. I accept a lot of uncertainty. The way I dissipate conflicts is move through a state of anger to a stage of wanting to get back together - be close. I do that physically without the anger being resolved and I think that happens for me by coming together sexually. It's great foreplay, but anger doesn't get resolved. I jmet set the issues aside and kind of pretend that everything is ok again.

By addressing my conflicts I choose to ignore struggle, opposition, controversy in the form of incompatible wants or impulses. The emotional tension and the effort involved is too much to handle and I am concerned that it will just end up in a fight or an arguement. By avoiding conflict, I do not open up the issues that would let me explore and understand my relationships with myself and others.

3. Distancing/impersonal roles/objectification

Roles are a response to expectations placed upon me by others. Each role manifests behaviorally in ways consistent with a set of expectations and attitudes that define me in each relationship I have with another. At times it is possible to play my roles so well that I may lose a sense of my real self. On the other hand roles can also be a way of not allowing the other to know who I am.

My roles influence my relations with others to the extent that they inhibit me from being authentic. If my intention is to defend or to protect, then impersonal roles provide a socially acceptable means of not revealing my real self. When I relate only from my roles, I indicate that I am not willing to openly share my thoughts, feelings, and experiences with others. By controlling myself in order to protect myself, I have taken the path of role playing. In so doing, I miss the opportunity to get to know my real self in relation to others.

I detach myself from others in order to avoid pain. My vulnerability arises out of my defensive fear of the other's capacity to hurt me. However, I cannot be hurt if I avoid becoming emotionally involved with others. Shielded by emotionally armored patterns of relating, I shut out the other.

> My first task became to sort out my boundaries with each of the people here.
> They fell into several categories.
> Not Interested in Them - people whose presence raised no real issues for me.
> Possible Friendship - people who shared some common stuff, interests, intellectual framework, etc. These people I'd feel comfortable with and wouldn't find terribly challenging.
> Sexual attraction
> As two weeks have passed the following has happened: The "not interested in them" group has moved to "friendship" or stayed in "not interested". The "friendship" group has moved to "not interested" or stayed in "friendship". The "sexual" group has moved to "not interested". The "fear" group has stayed in "fear" or moved to "friendship".

The conflict surfaces from needing people and at the same time being afraid of them. I want meaningful contact yet I put blocks in the way of achieving it. Impersonal roles, titles, positions of authority, the status quo, personal limits, and boundaries all create interpersonal distance.

> The act of being personal requires a definition of boundaries. When operating within a role, no sense of self is required. The role provides the boundaries. To be personal I mmet define and share myself. When in role this is neither possible nor expected.

Roles are unavoidable. Roles are a repertoire of appropriate behavioral patterns which are developed to maintain the smooth functioning of my social system.

> I remember the importance of title in the business world. The strong need to define your role and to have my role defined for others, so you don't have to reveal yourself. Roles and titles take away the need to be personal; they replace the need to be personal. The title "precedes" the person. My business card said "Branch Manager" so I did not personally have to "earn the right" or "authority" of my positon. I would just present my card or state my title and automatically there were expectations from myself and others on how I should be.

Often the roles that I play are not consistent with my true self which can result in a sense of estrangement. Playing roles with others in my personal relating can explain how I never really get to feel that I really connect with those who are important to me.

> It was also very limiting, in that being personal "blows my cover", upset the status quo. Being personal could actually be dangerous and threatening to others who did not want to deal with me in any way other than my role. The vulnerabilty of being personal can be frightening not only to me but even more so to others.

Impersonal roles are used as ways of moving away both from my person and moving away from being personal with the other. I tend to assume the protective cover of formal roles when I am fearful. What I gain from my roles in terms of control and comfort, I lose in meaningful contact and authentic expression.

When I am sexually attracted, create a romantic ideal, or place the other on a pedestal, I am objectifying the other. To treat the other as an object - sexual, intellectual, etc. - is to define and categorize the other. I then take that definition to be the other.

> I have had expectations - how I wanted to feel when I was with him and how I wanted him to be with me so I could feel safe and warm and loved. He is the only one I haven't allowed to be who he is - pedestal stuff, lover stuff.

When I delineate the outline of the person but do not really get to know the whole individual, I am creating distance. I build barriers between myself and others by labeling and objectifying them. Once I have determined the category, I stop the process of discovering and learning about who the other is.

> I have generally avoided contact all together with my strongest attractions. I go "nerdy" - very adolescent feeling. It's like a deferral of who I am to them, a letting go of my power, my own ground, my significance in their presence. I want to be approved of, worthy of his attention somehow. Placing him on a pedestal carries with it expectations of myself and how I should be in addition to expectations of him and how ideally he should be in order for me to justify my pedestal placing.

4. Self-criticism/self esteem/self-regard

My past experiences of put-downs or disapproval by parents, teachers, siblings and friends add to my feelings of self-doubt. It is this underlying fear of the pain of rejection and disapproval which leads me to develop elaborate defences and protections. I fear emotional pain and insecurity in the following situations:

rejection, criticism, failure, success, being wrong, looking stupid, being hurt, the other getting angry, not having control over my loved ones, others having control over me, being shut out, losing myself, losing face, feeling and expressing my deepest feelings, being vulnerable, knowing another, knowing myself, loving another deeply.

When I do not feel good about myself I tend to become self-critical and turn much of my frustrations upon myself.

> What am I doing wrong? Somehow blame enters usually turned inward. Why do I feel so desperate for contact, so inadequate at achieving it?
> I am unable to get my feelings into words and can't understand why it is so difficult to be clear. I start to blather and somehow the degree of "blathering" seems related to the energy behind my feelings. The stronger I feel the more I blather, then get lost in frustration with myself.

When I am not aware of my low self-esteem, I often blame the other for my bad feelings. Blame and criticism, directed either toward myself or others, tends to move me away from meaningful contact since both are ways of covering my true feelings.

I become self-critical when I focus on my imperfections, failures, or mistakes and condemn myself for not living up to the expectations of my ideal self.

> At these times, when I am feeling "inadequate", it seems safer to stay impersonal.

> I realize how much of myself I withhold through my judgments, assumptions of what others will think of me. I see how much I discount and stifle myself. If I am busy taking on judgments, getting into guilt and blame, I am missing seeing the other person. Not taking on the projections of the other if they don't fit or projecting myself (without awareness) on the other is the first step.

This critical assessment tends to lower my sense of my own worth and in turn makes me feel less willing to contact others out of fear that they will not value me either.

> My hurt comes from my experience of not being acknowledged for who I am - what I have to offer of myself is being rejected, is not good enough. I have fear that it won't be good enough. I won't get it right. My focus is on how I look/come across. My fear is that I am being blamed for not meeting his ideal. I feel those things I value in myself are not being seen or recognized. I feel willing to open myself up, bare my guts, then when I do I am rejected. I have enough self-hatred and paranoia that I don't need to take on other people's judgments.

I need support and recognition yet am worried that others might think about me in the same rejecting way I see myself.

> It is also terrifying becamee I get into my self-doubt and self-judgments - this isn't interesting, this is petty, this isn't well-expressed, etc. The dilemma is that I want to move to intimacy with this person who is important to me but I'm scared. I have an investment of caring about him, of valuing him. The more I care, the larger the investment I have in wanting connection and contact, the more I want to be liked, approved of by him.

The issue which underlies my behavior in this tendency is one of inclusion: Am I in or out of relations/contact with the other? Inclusion becomes an issue when I do not experience being in meaningful contact with the other. In order to conceal or diminish my feelings of alienation I move away from the other? The emotional issue is one of significance; that is, do I feel important, acknowledged and/or recognized by the other. In order to hide my hurt and feelings of insignificance, I move away from the other.

The effects of my fear when it is turned inward are guilt, self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, self-hatred and often a deferral of who I am. Given my low self-esteem brought on by feelings of inadequacy and insignificance, I tend to withhold, conceal, stifle and discount myself for not meeting my ideal self, and in turn, the ideals of others. Withdrawing or moving away from others is a way of defending myself against having others see these parts of myself that I do not like. The other cannot judge me if I can develop a protective distance through maintaining my image or impersonal role. In face of my own self-criticism I move away from others fearing that their evaluations will be just as harsh. If I move away from contact with others by not being present and not sharing what I think or feel then I cannot be judged. The tendency to move away from is closely related to the intention to defend/protect.

C. Moving Against

The tendency to move against has to do with perceiving the other as someone I need to control in order to protect myself from possible pain. The purpose of my defensiveness is often not directed towards fulfillment in my relating but rather at protection from unpleasant feelings. To lessen my feelings of anxiety, isolation, helplessness, fear, and hostility I strive for control in my relations with others. Not trusting the other, I take control of my reactions and the others by focusing on dominating, manipulating and aggressing in the given situation. This control of myself and others manifests as "moving against" the other.

The behavioral issue which arises in this tendency is one of control. Do I feel one-up or one-down in my relating? The question of how much influence and control I exercise in relation to the other manifests as moving against. The emotional issue underlying this tendency is competence in relation to my ability to cope. I struggle in my attempts to satisfy my wants and needs, handle my problems, and make decisions in my relationships. When I feel incompetent or inadequate in my relating, I protect myself by moving against the other rather than show my vulnerable self.

The effects of my fear as it is turned outward begins with mistrust and the need to protect/defend. To protect the self from threat I move against the other by striking out with blame, judgment, and criticism. In my attempts to control the other I find myself invariably immersed in conflict and power struggles. Disappointment, frustration, resentment and anger are the resulting emotional responses to my unmet expectations of others.

1. Fear/mistrust/defending

My past experiences of put-downs or disapproval by parents, teachers, siblings and friends add to my feelings of self-doubt. It is this underlying fear of the pain of rejection and disapproval which leads me to develop elaborate defences and protections.

The fear of rejection is more complex than appears at first glance. This basic fear in interpersonal relating is twofold: being rejected and having to reject others. As I reveal more of myself to another person, I fear that they will not like who I am and reject me because of who I am. I also fear that as others reveal more of themselves to me that I may not like them or want to be with them and would need to reject them.

The fear of losing my sense of self and the fear of others losing their sense of identity are two fears which are common in relationships. When I am involved with another in an ongoing relationship I have to balance my contact with my need to be alone. If I do not find a way to strike a balance between my need for contact and aloneness, then concerns of losing autonomy and freedom begin to surface. I fear I am losing myself in relating with the other when my sense of who I am as an individual becomes unclear. Being in relations often requires a giving up, a compromising, a yielding or joining with the other. As I endeavour to come together with another, how do I maintain my own sense of self? The fear is that I won't accomplish this. As I become more dependent on another for my definition of self, I experience a loss of my own boundaries. I fear losing my freedom and my ability to individuate. The complement of this identity issue is the fear that others will lose themselves with me and become dependent on me.

When I see the other as the cause of my pain or fear, I spend a considerable amount of time and energy trying to change, influence, manipulate and control them.

> My attempts to be personal were driven by paranoia. I have a strong discomfort when I don't know where I sit with someone. Here I was dropped into a setting where I didn't know anyone hardly and was supposed to interact with them. This was for me very anxiety-provoking.
> I am watchful because I have had experiences of "opening up" to people and revealing information where it has proven to be in poor judgment. I have pushed aside my intuitions which have told me to "hold back" or "be more cautious" and now realize that I have to be more discriminating in developing relationships.

Not trusting, I am less open and begin to look for strategies for dealing with the other. My defensiveness increases from my fear that I cannot and do not trust the other.

> I feel unsafe unless the other person is willing to also be curious about me, to share their thoughts and feelings with me, to reveal and allow me to see some of who they are.

If I expect to be disliked and rejected then I will act suspicious and guarded.

> It's got to do with fear, with people knowing me or someone knowing something about me that I don't know about myself.

In order to cope with the fear of being rejected or of not living up to the expectations of others, I develop defenses which move me against the other.

> In being open the vulnerable part is telling you about my fears. The stuff that I feel vulnerable about is the stuff that you could use to attack or hurt me. It would be some power you have over me, something you could say or do to really hurt. Like being betrayed, I trust and end up getting hurt. It's like an exchange of goods: if I don't have anything on you then I'm wary.

When I am not sure of myself, I cover up by putting on protective masks. I find it difficult to be with others, fearing that I will not meet their expectations.

> If only I can maintain the image, I will be safe. I will be me. Image. Maintain it at all costs. To them. To myself.
> Fear - These were the ones I could read the least and immediately aroused my transference issues. I felt uncomfortable around them and needed to know where they were at in order to relax with them.

2. Judgments/blaming/criticism

Judgments express my opinions which are the result of my thinking about a given situation or person. Based on my assumptions, I make judgments about myself and the other which often imply a degree of approval or disapproval. Evaluations and judgments that express disapproval are threatening to others. In forming and expressing my critical attitudes, evaluations, and opinions, I tend to create distance.

> I judge people as too intellectual, too superficial or I objectify them by putting them up on a pedestal. I act as if the perception is reality and separate myself from people by putting myself down or by feeling superior to them.

It is this attitude of criticism, judgment and disapproval which exemplifies the tendency of moving against the other.

The conclusions I make about another person affect my thinking and my relating with them.

> So I could say that what you're doing or could do is what's stopping me from being personal.

My perception of a person is experienced as I see, feel and hear the other. Yet the other person exists for me both perceptually and conceptually. Rather than just sensing, I form a concept or a set of assumptions about the other. I close off my perception of the other and rely on my existing conceptions and conclusive judgments. Even as they stand before me, I may not be paying attention to their expressions because I have already decided that I know enough to contend with them. I stop being curious or open to questioning who they are as I have already concluded who they are.

Blaming the other or controlling through threats of disapproval or guilt over having done something wrong indicates a high degree of righteousness. The popular expression "My way or the highway" implies a demand rather than a request. The question is, do I have to make the other wrong in order to feel that I am right? Criticism through hostile comments used to make the other wrong is another form of control. The issue of right and wrong plays a significant part in this. If I could see that the idea of being right or wrong is less useful than the concept of agreeing or disagreeing then the possiblity of us both winning through understanding becomes an option.

3. Power struggle/control/conflict

I want control over my life. I strive to develop ways to manipulate, influence and control in order to maintain a sense of security. I fear the loss of control which ultimately manifests as the fear that I will not be able to cope with my emotional responses. If I see others as a threat, I will tend to spend energy trying to influence and control them in order to reduce my anxiety. This intention to defend by means of control manifests either through my attempts to criticize and change the other or through my avoidance and indifference. In subtle ways, I manipulate others by controlling through fear, intimidation, mistrust, competition and withholding approval, love and support.

In this theme I see relationship as a competition which must end with a winner and a loser. I am afraid of unconsciously giving in to the other or of being manipulated. Both of these indicate a fear of loss of control which in turn causes me to take more control in the relationship.

> Underneath my need to take care of can often be my need to control. I have to be honest with my need to control by checking out my intentions. Am I feeling love, caring and wanting to express that or am I feeling a need to control stemming from my own fear of being rejected, abandoned?

When I feel threatened, I find some way to protect myself against the perceived attack. The intention is to protect through control, to be one up or to put the other into a one down position. Unfortunately there are no real winners if either of us is left feeling misunderstood or uncared for. The loser tends to become more protective against further loss of integrity and esteem. Fearing that others will try to get even or try to control me, I am constantly on guard. These assumptions that the other is hostile and out to get me is often a result of my own defensiveness, selective perception and polarized (good/bad, right/wrong) thinking.

Underlying this pattern is the need for power, control, success and domination which manifest in a variety of ways.

> I realize that in those exchanges where I have felt most connected, the recognition of the other and the absence of a major power exchange have been the key. Even in relationships where poIr struggle is there, the real intimate moments have been when the power struggle has been minimized, put on the back burner.

The need to be acknowledged/seen and to acknowledge/see the other has been a priority.

I try to get the other to do what I want with disapproval. Since approval is important to most people often the mere threat of the withdrawal of acceptance is enough to influence or change the other. In trying to change the other I often resort to blaming, making the other wrong with anger, threats, criticism, accusations, complaints, sarcasm, lectures and explanations.

4. Expectations/anger

The inclination to get into repetitive patterns in relationships is based on the intention to defend. My expectations of how others should be if they really care about me establish a perceptual base which leads readily to various forms of dissappointment, frustration and anger. These repetitive patterns are often derived from the ways my needs were satisfied in the past. What has been, that is, what I have known, seems to me to be the way the world is. This belief contributes to the conclusion that the way it is, is the way it has to be. By remaining in relational patterns that are familiar I maintain comfort in the known and avoid the unkown risk of change. What is alien may be far more threatening than what is familiar. Therefore repeating the past can be a way of remaining connected to familiar types of emotional situations. The self-fulfilling cycle keeps me protected in my relations with others by providing comfort and predictability.

The anger which occurs from unmet expectations is a means of covering my hurt and disappointment. This reaction results from living either in the past or in the future. Preoccupation with guilt, around what I should have done or with catastrophic expectations about what will happen creates anxiety. This anxiety stems from a need to control my external world and eliminate uncertainty in my life. I in turn hide my anxiety with my anger.

> What I would need in order to feel safe and move out and feel comfortable is for you to fit what I would consider to be a safe person.
> Someone who is able to take what I am saying at a gut level, who is accepting of me. If I felt accepted by you maybe this other stuff wouldn't matter at all, maybe the base of feeling accepted is all I need.
> I lay a whole bunch of expectations at your feet and say if you want to be personal with me this is how you do it.
>
> I expect things to be a certain way, then disapprove or get angry when it doesn't turn out as I wanted.

> My assumption is that they will share my way of being personal. My assumptions are not always accurate so I have to be clear what my intentions are and how direct I am being. Am I projecting my own interpretation of being personal on them, judging them to not be personal by my standards when they consider they are being personal by theirs?

My need for perfection, to measure up to an idealized image creates a significant demand which often ends in either disappointment or anger.

> I have had expectations - how I wanted to feel when I was with him and how I wanted him to be with me so I could feel safe and warm and loved. He is the only one I haven't allowed to be who he is - pedestal stuff, lover stuff.

My tendency of moving against is characterized by the reactive position to fight consciously or unconsciously to protect the self.

> I judge that I am putting out who I am and feel frustrated and isolated (hurt) that he is not reciprocating. What I judge as personal can be very different for him. There is a permission factor to being personal. It seems that it is like sex: it must be between "consenting" people; otherwise it can actually be threatening, intrusive of another's privacy, safety. Without checking out the other's interest, investment, commitment, am I seen as aggressing and violating their privacy? I need to remember to check how open they are to receiving me before barging in.

If I implicitly distrust the feelings and intentions of others towards myself, my tendency then will be to protect by moving against.

Frustration occurs when my attempt to do something is blocked, my expectations are not fulfilled or when my goals are not reached. Frustration is a sense of losing control over my wants. My difficulties in dealing with frustration can manifest in manipulative temper tantrums, explosive behavior, self-pity, leading to demands for sympathy or immediate gratification.

Anger can be a cover for my fear. Anticipating rejection, criticism, failure, punishment or disapproval can cause me to react with anger, resentment or hate. When I am afraid the other will not approve of me or will make fun of me, I begin to develop feelings of anger or resentment. These feelings hide my truth and cover my pain and fear.

> The way I dissipate conflicts is move through a state of anger to a stage of wanting to get back together and be close. I do that physically without the anger being resolved and I think that happens for us by coming together sexually. It's great foreplay, but the anger doesn't get resolved. I just set the issues aside and kind of pretend that everything is ok again.

One of my greatest fears is the fear of not being able to cope with a given situation. By acknowledging that the fear is self-imposed, I can begin to learn ways of improving my ability to cope. According to the principle of choice, rather than feeling that things are being done to me, I can begin to acknowledge my part in allowing these things to happen.

D. Moving Towards

The tendency of moving towards has to do with being known by another through a close experience of relating.

This quality of relating is attained through interpersonal openness, a willingness to disclose our essential self to the other. Intimacy comes from the Latin root "intimum", which means interiority, my innermost core. Both opening to my own process and opening to the other's process moves me towards intimacy. It is allowing the other to come to know me, to see me as I see myself, to see me from the core of my being. When I can freely share with another what I am thinking and feeling, and can be received with respect and caring in return, intimacy flourishes. The willingness to be open and vulnerable manifests as "moving towards" the other.

1. Authenticity/knowing self/personal truth

My self is clarified and empowered through the process of examining my personal truth. Such clarification is achieved by developing self-awareness and recognizing the responsibility for my part in the process of relating with another person. The basic requirement seems to be a willingness to be open to learning about myself without the imposition of righteousness, blame, or other such defensive maneuvers.

My personal truth is acknowledged by recognizing my own functioning at a deep level with the aim of understanding rather than evaluating. Personal relating is more vital and intimate when engaged in from a level of truth. Withholding and lying are distancing behaviors resulting in a sense of alienation from the other.

My personal truth is an acknowledgement of my thoughts, feelings and body responses in the context of my being in the world. The path to my truth is awareness. I can come to know myself more fully through my willingness to learn about those aspects of myself which are either hidden, protected or unknown. Here I have the dynamic of choice which manifests as a function of honesty. The level of honesty and awareness of my personal truth can be seen as a function of my willingness and ability to be open to learning about myself with another person. Perhaps the best way to determine what level of truth and personal understanding is necessary in any particular context is to notice the amount of mental preoccupation I generate from the interaction. This unfinished business requires attention to my underlying truth.

Schutz (1984) described various levels of truth. The first layers begins with feeling something and not expressing it. The next level in moving towards truth requires knowing and expressing the feelings I am experiencing. I then need to understand the relationship between the situation and my resulting feelings in order to deepen the level of truth. As I become aware of my own defenses and protections I can open the door to a deeper truth by recognizing how I feel about myself.

Authenticity means a commitment to stay with my own experience, conveying my genuine feelings, thoughts and awareness of my ongoing process.

> My ability and willingness to be personal determine how intimate and connected I can/will be with myself and others. They determine the quality of my life.

As has been noted in this research, there are many forces which act to restrain or inhibit such expression of my authentic self. I tend to experience my struggle for authentic expression as I move towards more personal contact with others.

> Needing desperately to be open and connecting with others. Hesitant to open myself up to do this. This is my struggle.
> I want to be able to be myself without guard.
> And even when I feel guarded, I want to find a way of getting through or getting out of the way the stuff that stops me from being myself in my relations with others. It is not something I find I do very easily; a lot of "stuff" gets in the way.

Fear and anxiety tend to immobilize my expressions in a variety of ways.

> I feel awkward, blocked in getting to know certain people better. I feel impotent, stuck when I think I want to be more personal but can't seem to shift to a personal level with them.
> I find that it is easier to be personal with people I have little investment in. I can delude myself into thinking I am being intimate.

Expressing my unedited wants and needs, likes and dislikes, emotions and thoughts provides an opportunity to drop pretense and defenses and to move towards personal truth.

It is possible to learn how to be more personal, to

> become conscious of it -- one of the most important factors is to learn to become present, stay present and be curious about the other as well as the self.

When I remain true to my own being, without mask or role, my real self emerges to allow for an intimate experience of my authenticity.

> So much of my life I have spent convincing myself of my "independence" - "I don't need anybody else"; "I can make it on my own". I have proved it over and over again.
> Yet what is this emptiness I feel? Now that I recognize I have proved that I can make it on my own, I no longer have a need to prove it.
> Is my capacity in "being alone against the world" a sign of my competence in my aloneness or incompetence in relationship? I wonder if I can make it with another, whether I can really connect. My quest is for connection. I want to connect.

Authenticity means being myself truthfully in relating with others. Yet at times it seems that I have lost contact with my true self.

> They say "be yourself as fully as you can" and that really makes sense to me yet I really don't know who "my self" is. I keep it so tightly under wraps.

Contacting and expressing my authentic being is essential to maintaining nourishing relations based in an atmosphere of trust. Being personal involves knowing the self by developing awareness and learning to be a student of my own behavior. As I observe myself, attend to the effects of my behavior and become receptive to the responses of others, I come to know my authentic self.

If my intention is to understand-learn, then I must face my fears and come to terms with my emotions. In face of my hurt and fear, I need to be open to exploring with the other my part in creating the situation leading to these feelings. If I feel unhappy or upset as a result of what the other does, then it becomes my responsibility to work toward understanding my own behavior. When I feel hurt, fear or pain I can choose to deny it by defending/ protecting or I can choose to learn/understand it. When I know who I am, show who I am, and act in accord with my wants, then I allow others to know me.

2. Openness/sharing

Empathy, respect, genuiness, warmth, self-disclosure and trust are the conditions which Carl Rogers (1961) suggested as necessary for growth in relationships. In order to apply these principles I need the awareness to deal openly and directly with others in the immediate moment, to let them know where I stand with them and to acknowledge where they stand with me.

As I relate with others, I learn not only about them and their reality but also about myself, my perceptions, beliefs and values. Much of what I know about myself comes from my interactions with others. Some of what I know about myself is shared while some things are considered private. The other can help me come to know myself better by understanding the effects of my actions on others. By seeing myself in the mirror that others provide, I can come to know my authentic self.

I can increase my self-knowledge by sharing and opening myself in my relations with others. When others know more about me, they are better able to understand and support who I am. A sharing of self with others requires that I have the courage to trust and risk disclosing myself.

> Being personal is layered like an onion. As I release/express a top layer, another layer -insights- is revealed to me. Unless I put out the top layer, rather than holding onto it (keeping it to myself), what is underneath is not revealed to me or the other and my communication stays superficial.

The degree to which I am willing to share determines the depth and quality of my relating.

> Expressing my experience of his comment is equally important to understanding his experience. I see that for me I cannot go beyond a certain level of being personal without "clearing" my perceptions and processing my judgments of the situation. The act of clearing opens up possibilities of becoming more personal. Being personal is a result of me being myself with him and seeing him for who he is.

By sharing and disclosing I begin to uncover my true selves; I open up to the possibility of more meaningful personal contact. The act of self-disclosing is not always easy because it often leads to learning things about myself that I do not like.

> I find it difficult to move to another level of relating. I try to move out and make the connection when I want to be personal and I want to share something. I guess what really stops me is what stops me all the time: I'm afraid to be as open as I might

want to be.

Yet if the intention in moving towards the other is to understand and learn, then self-disclosing myself creates the opportunity for personal growth.

> To move to a deeper level of intimacy, I feel I have to let go, express my judgements, hear what his are of me. I then fear that when I do express myself that he will take offence. In the act of wanting to be closer, I will actually drive him away. I will be honest about who I am, but who I am is sometimes petty, unattactive, hard to be with, and unseeing of the other. I will then lose this person that is so important to me. My gateway to myself is my ability, my willingness to be personal with others. Relatedness is my pathway, to be at one with myself and therefore at one with the universe.

The degree to which I allow myself to be aware of the things about myself about which I have feelings of fear, guilt or shame is the degree to which I can be honest with myself. What I am conscious of is determined by my willingness and ability to know myself.

I often engage in my relating with others without realizing much of what is happening. I become intellectually and emotionally invested in my preferred ways of relating. Unaware of the complexities inherent in the process of relating, I become habitual and unconscious, much like my breathing. I perceive the world through frameworks of old experiences creating meaning without awareness. The choice becomes whether to bring that which I am unaware to my conscious awareness or to remain victim to unconscious habit. Increased awareness of how I think and perceive can change my understanding of myself and my relations with others. Awareness allows me to awaken to my possibilities, be more sensitive to my own thoughts and feelings, to be more connected with my body, and to become more responsible for my behavior. Awareness gives me the freedom to have choice about how I relate.

3. Self-affirming/acknowledgement/needs from other

My close relationships are based on commitments and agreements, some of which are expressed while others are only assumed to exist. I want to give and receive love, empathy and caring in my personal relationhips. There is trust and a willingness to risk whenever I feel close, intimate or open to the other. I have a sense of being able to be myself. Developing and maintaining these relations requires a willingness to be involved with another person in ways that are mutually supportive and emotionally fulfilling. I want to feel the safety that comes from affirming that the other cares about me. I pursue more personal relationships with people who will understand and accept me for who I am.

When I am trusting of myself then I am more able to enter into the process of understanding and learning about myself. When I am trusting of my inner processes I am more able to come to know myself. When I am trusting of others I am more able to learn about them and my relationship with them. Becoming trusting of myself and others allows me to develop the capacity to be accepting and loving. Love and acceptance grow as I share more of my warmth, caring, genuineness and vulnerabilty. It is in an environment of trust and acceptance that I am able to risk growth and develop intimacy.

Intimacy grows in the communication of acceptance to others and in nurturing self-acceptance.

> How easy it is to forget what I both want from each other is acceptance, compassion and understanding - longing to be seen, a longing to be acknowledged. I both share that commmon fundamental need to be personal and to be with someone who is personal with us.

Self-acceptance and the acceptance of others are related and can set up self-fulfilling prophecies where my expectations of positive outcomes are confirmed as a result of my behavior.

> Someone who is able to take what I am saying at a gut level, who is accepting of me. If I felt accepted by you maybe this other stuff wouldn't matter at all, maybe the base of feeling accepted is all I need.

If I exercise compassion with myself then I am likely to treat others in the same way.

Implicit in me being personal is the desire to be connected with another in order to overcome a deep sense of loneliness and isolation.

> It is also terrifying because I get into my self-doubt and self-judgments - this isn't interesting, this is petty, this isn't well-expressed etc. The dilemma is that I want to move to intimacy with this person who is important to me but I'm scared. I have an

> investment of caring about him, of valuing him. The more I care, the larger the investment I have in wanting connection and contact, the more I want to be liked, approved of by him.

There is a desire to be met, acknowledged, affirmed, understood in an atmosphere of trust and support. I seek to find fulfilling ways to be with others through the process of learning how to give and receive caring. I want to find ways of coming together that allow each of us to be authentic.

> I know there are certain payoffs that I highly value but it's work to do it and I can't just move with it. It's a sense of belonging, an affirmation of self. It's feeling alive, feeling integrated. There is something about connecting with a person that is affirming to my life, something at my core.

Acknowledgement occurs when someone says or does something to show me that my actions have been received and understood.

> I feel unsafe unless other persons are willing to also be curious about me, to share their thoughts and feelings with me, to reveal and allow me to see some of who they are.

Understanding and acknowledgement, either verbal or nonverbal, are essential in enhancing my personal relationships. I feel a sense of belonging and an affirmation of self when I receive recognition, acceptance or approval from others. Support and caring build my sense of trust and confidence in the other. In an atmosphere of trust, love, and affection, my need to be needed increases. My feelings of value and significance grow as I am reassured that I am important to others.

4. Understanding the other

I am present to a situation or to another person when I am fully aware of my feelings, thoughts, and body responses in a particular time and place. Presence is the quality of immediate awareness in which I come to know myself directly in relation to the given situation or person. Presence is being connected physionomically with my authentic self as I respond to the world as it presents itself. When my attention is in the past, in the future, in another place or with another person then I am not present. An important part for me in being personal is being present with what is happening between myself and the other in the moment.

> In being personal, I can express my desire to get to know him, to allow myself to express my caring for him - to see and be seen by him. I have not acknowledged his statement, heard what he is telling me about himself. This is his experience of mistrust. I cannot change his experience. I want him to trust me. I judge that he can trust me. But the fact is that in this moment he is sharing that he does not. Is it that he has an issue with trust and he is projecting that onto me? If I can get past my blame of myself and him, I could see him and express who I am. Instead of defending myself, not hearing him, and not acknowledging my separate experiences, I can become curious. What is his experience? How does that feel for him?

In a state of acceptance I feel no need to defend. Accepting another with no conditions creates an ambience of positive regard which allows others to be who they are.

> What is my experience? How am I feeling? What are my options in responding to this moment - to express myself or to understand him? One option is be personal, to be there for him, to understand his space.

Rather than screening others through a filter of my own judgments, I need to acknowledge and receive the other as is.

> I need to see him more clearly, to appreciate my differences without threat, need or desire to change or alter his behavior or point of view.

When I allow myself to relate with an attitude of empathy and acceptance towards the other, I find that the other senses my invitation to be open and responds in kind. As I communicate my acceptance and intent to understand the other, I move towards being personal.

Understanding the other is attained through listening. When I can comprehend the others' world-view I can come to a more intimate knowing of them. To acknowledge their truth or reality is to indicate recognition of my separateness and uniqueness. To understand their position, to accept their truth, to be empathic or sympathetic, is to move towards others, towards more intimate relating.

5. Responsibility

The issue of responsibility is related to how I co-create my interpersonal reality. Responsibility is often defined as the ability to respond. Yet in this discussion, responsibility is defined as my willingness and abilty to be accountable for my part in creating a given interaction.

> When I can identify, clarify for myself what is happening, I can let go of the need to defend, blame, etc. I need to let go of my assumptions and imaginations and acknowledge what is.
> For example, when he says "I don't trust you", I hear "You can't be trusted". I then feel misunderstood, blame him and myself, get into being angry, wanting to defend and protect myself.
> My experience of myself is that I can be trusted. How is it that he doesn't see me that way? I take it on; there is something wrong with me. I can choose to feel hurt and rejected; he doesn't care about me, etc.

The question "what have I done to elicit this response?" captures an essential meaning of responsibility. To be responsible is to be accountable for what I do, think and feel.

> My assumption is that they will share my way of being personal. My assumptions are not always accurate so I have to be clear what my intentions are and how direct I am being. Am I projecting my own interpretation of being personal on them, judging them to not be personal by my standards when they consider they are being personal by theirs?

When I take responsibility I own up to my choices and see myself as the source of my own behavior.

The tendency of moving towards is characterized by the degree of openness I demonstrate in my relating. Am I open or closed to sharing my feelings and innermost thoughts? To be open is to move towards the other. The emotional issue is related to self-esteem; that is, how accepting am I of myself? When I feel likeable my tendency to move towards the other increases. As I try to create friendly relations in my world, I express my need for affection and intimacy as a partner/lover/friend. Moving towards others is a way of satisfying my needs to be liked, wanted, desired, loved. Moving towards others is an attempt to increase my feelings of acceptance, approval and appreciation. Being personal means to share my vulnerability in spite of my estrangement and fears. Increasing my feelings of belonging and support, in turn, I decrease my feelings of isolation and loneliness. Moving towards is the tendency which allows me to fulfill my needs for meaningful contact in the world.

E. Deep Structures

The concept of deep structure as used in this study is adapted from the assertion of Chomsky (1968) and other linguists that all languages share a basic or deep structure that is directly related to the physical structure of the brain. The assumption being that the map is not the territory, it is only a representation of the territory (Korzybski, 1941). The linguistic representations of being personal which have manifest as data in this study are therefore viewed as having a deeper structure which is more directly related to the person's lived-experience. The layers of meaning from surface to deep structure in this study follow a sequence from descriptions to themes, into patterns, then to tendencies and finally to underlying intentions.

Development of a comprehensive understanding of the deep structures of the process of being personal is the primary aim of this discussion. Deep structures are the patterns of personal relating that emerge when the phenomenological method of assumption-free description is utilized . The deep structures are the organized and repetitive ways in which I think, feel and act. These structures represent the implicit organization of my behavior, beliefs, expectations, and feelings which influence how I relate with others. The deep structures provide a more complete representation of the experience of being personal from which the themes and patterns have been derived. A fuller description of these structures can be helpful in facilitating personal growth through self-knowing.

Two interrelated structures of human interaction are what have been refered to as tendencies and intentions. Intentions manifest in the polarity processes of pulling back to defend and moving toward to understand.

Tendencies, on the other hand, seem to divide into three behavioral manifestations: moving away from, moving against, and moving towards. In this framework intentions denote a deeper underlying structure which manifests in the form of behavioral tendencies. For example, the intention to defend/protect underlies the tendency to move away from or to move against. Both of these tendencies create a protective distancing through either withdrawing from or pushing apart from the other. The intention to understand learn on the other hand manifests behaviorally as the tendency to move toward.

Intentions manifest as behavioral tendencies as discussed in the previous sections. The intent to defend-protect underlies the tendency to "move away from" or to "move against" while the intent to understand-learn is implicit in the tendency to "move towards" the other. In my attempt to understand interpersonal relating and intimacy I must deal with ever-changing processes, the dynamics and patterns of which denote a certain constancy. The nature and structure of intimacy are therefore not only understood in terms of what allows it to occur, but also, in terms of what prevents it from occurring. Intimacy is therefore not a static thing but rather a dynamic process which moves in a number of directions. These patterns of movement represent the deep structures, the underlying aspects of interpersonal relating, and are characterized by the direction of movement, specifically the tendencies of "moving towards", "moving away from", and "moving against" another person.

When viewed from this framework of deep structures, intentions suggest a consciousness of and relatedness to the other. I am a relational being and my intentions manifest as behaviors which are directed toward the world/other and have effect on the world/other. When I can see that it is through my intentions and my behavioral tendencies towards the other that I co-constitute my relational reality, then I have choice to create a chosen effect.

Intentions

The process of personal relating is intentional. Whether I am aware of it or not, I have intentions towards others, either to influence a certain result or to get something from others. My intentions represent the essential motivations underlying what I do. Intentions can be expressed as the need to move towards, as in protocol D - "needing desperately to be open and connecting with others" or as in protocol G needing to move away from contact with others "separate myself from people by putting myself down or by feeling superior to them".

Often my intentions are veiled or I have lost my awareness of them, or I may be reluctant to tell the other what I want and as a result tend to disguise my intentions from both myself and others. Further, when I don't know the intentions of the other, I make inferences and value judgments as I seek to understand their motivations. Identifying these underlying intentions can be helpful in understanding the meaning of my personal interactions. When my behavior is not functional in terms of my intention I need to become more aware of the intention and then alter my actions to get what I want. This can become obvious by paying attention to the effects my actions are having on myself and on others.

Two main intentions underlying interpersonal relating are the intent to defend/protect and the intent to understand/learn. Bugental (1965) refers to these as the path of dread/courage, Gibb (1978) as defending/discovering processes and Paul and Paul (1983) as the path of protection/evolution. The intention to defend-protect stops me from being personal while the intention to understand-learn moves me into the unknown and to deeper levels of personal relating.

Intention to Defend/Protect

My natural response to situations in which I perceive threat is "fight or flight". Attacking or withdrawing are ways of dealing with my fear or anxiety. I attack the other and show that he or she is wrong as a way of creating distance and safety by pushing them away. Withdrawing from the struggle alllows me to lessen the feelings of hurt. When I withdraw or attack, however, my authentic feelings become lost and the possibility for open communication becomes more remote. Defending or protecting in these ways only serve to further remove me from the experience of contact and intimacy.

In a depersonalized, high-pressured society which does not encourage me to take the time necessary to understand myself, I develop defensive and protective stances towards others. I was not taught the skills required to develop intimate relationships in experiences of formal education. Nor was I brought up in a family that modeled how to know my own feelings, communicate them effectively, and listen empathically to the other's experience. Without the wisdom and skills necessary to initiate and sustain meaningful relationships I developed defenses which have separated me even more from authentic contact with others. In my experience of separateness, I am seldom courageous enough to open up and be vulnerable by showing my inner self. I fear that the other may exploit me. The fear is that if I let myself think, feel, and act freely I may be rejected. And so, in protecting myself, the other cannot come to know my inner self. As I develop more layers of protection, I also begin to lose connection with myself. I see my defenses more clearly in the above discussion of the tendencies to move away from and move against.

Too often the intent to defend-protect myself against pain and the fears of disapproval or rejection dominates my thinking and creates difficulties in my relationships. My intention to defend-protect therefore reflects my underlying desire to defend against real or imagined threat, pain, or fear. The aim of protection is often not at fulfilment or growth but rather at safety and comfort. To lessen my feelings of isolation, helplessness, fear, and hostility, I strive for protection or control in my relations with others. I tend to reflect my feelings and my intentions to defend-protect through my behavior. I become defensive as I "move away from" the other and feel removed, indifferent and empty. As I "move against" the other I feel angry, irritated and resentful.

When I feel threatened, I immediately and habitually find ways to defend myself against the impending pain. I feel a need to defend the self I think I am or would like to be. I create an image, mask, or facade so that others won't know who I really am. The loss of trust and the growth of fear often result in alienation, loneliness, and hostility. Fear stops the flow of my expression and directs my energies towards protecting myself from the perceived, anticipated or imagined threats. Fear and mistrust escalate tensions with others and tend to be self-fulfilling. As I become more protective of myself, I create more barriers and become more distant. This in turn raises defenses in others.

My past experiences of put-downs or disapproval by parents, teachers, siblings and friends add to my feelings of self-doubt. It is this underlying fear of the pain of rejection and disapproval which leads me to develop elaborate defences and protections. I fear emotional pain and insecurity in the following situations:
rejection, criticism, failure, success, being wrong, looking stupid, being hurt, others getting angry, not having control over my loved ones, others having control over me, being shut out, losing myself, losing face, feeling and expressing my deepest feelings, being vulnerable, knowing another, knowing myself, loving another deeply.

Intention to Understand/Learn

The intention to understand/learn suggests a process whereby I begin to understand by taking responsibility for my fears and to learn about myself by examining how I defend-protect. An openness and curiosity to both intrapersonal and interpersonal process confirms the intent to understand/learn.

My behavior follows the well-established patterns either to defend-protect or to understand-learn. To become aware of these patterns/intentions and to understand how they affect others is to open the door to learning and intimacy. At the beginning of a relationship, exploration involves sharing what is already known about myself, whereas in an ongoing relationship I continue to reveal what is hidden or unknown. A curiosity in learning and a compassion in understanding about myself and others allow us to see emotions as something to be explored rather than avoided. When the intent to protect myself and control the other predominates, there is an inclination to be closed instead of being open to understanding the others' perceptions and feelings. The intent to understand-learn indicates a willingness to be open and vulnerable, to experience directly rather than experiencing through defensive filters.

When I have developed self-awareness and become willing to share feelings and perceptions, I move toward being personal with others and toward a deeper connection with my own essential nature.

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

A. Statement of General Structure

The previous chapter presented the strucures of being personal which emerged from the data. I will next examine statements of the general structure of personal relating which have surfaced. These statements will serve to contextualize the essential phenomenological descriptions which follow.

Concealment Based on Fear

Psychological and physical health are profoundly affected by the extent to which we have found meaning, direction, and purpose in our existence. As Jourard (1971) has indicated, the act of concealment keeps us from sustaining healthy and meaningful human relationships, and thus from maintaining optimum psychological and physical health. The data presented have clearly shown that the struggle between being closed and being personal is an ongoing dilemma for the two co-researchers; they both seem to spend a great deal of energy trying to keep others from knowing them. This behavior seems to be based on the fear that if their true selves become known they will be rejected.

Intimacy Based on Trust

To reveal oneself to another implies more than just the transfer of information. Effective personal relating requires an increased level of self-awareness directed toward understanding of one's own motives, feelings and self-concept. Being personal requires a high level of trust both of self and the other. As one increases self-awareness one develops trust in one's own self through being personal with others. Being personal for these co-researchers was not easily achieved.The lower the level of trust the more the co-researchers tended to engage in defensive/protective behaviors. An example of this intention to defend/protect was seen in the theme "judgement" which emerged in the tendency to "move against". Judgements, as noted in the previous chapters, create a protective/defensive distance between one's self and others. Carl Rogers (1961) concurs with this finding when he writes "the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove". In becoming aware of one's judgements and acknowledging the distance that they create, a person can choose alternatively, to move towards the other with the intention to learn and understand. This movement toward being personal requires a willingness to trust both one's self and the other.

Being Personal and Meaning

People's lives begin to lose meaning as they become estranged from others (Yalom, 1980). The data indicates that the co-researchers have a desire to develop more meaningful lives. by improving the quality of their relating with others. I have seen this human desire for meaning in life arrise in my therapuetic encounters with clients and in my personal relationships with friends and collegues. It is not their differences in wants and expectations, that leads to difficulties and distance in personal relating. Rather it is how people behave as a result of these wants values and expectations that influences intimacy and meaningful contact. These "how" patterns need to be brought to awareness and understood if clients are to develop in-depth insights leading to permanent changes in their ways of being personal as part of their quest for meaningful living (Hayward, 1984).

To Be or Not To Be Personal

In terms of the present research findings, it can be noted that being personal carries with it the possibility of its opposite, of being impersonal. This state of having two directly opposite tendencies is created by a fear, or anticipation, of impending pain on the one hand and a desire for comfort, acceptance, and support on the other (Maslow, 1962). The principle of polarity then is not to be confused with the idea of opposition or conflict. Polarities can be complements (Wilber, 1981), contact and withdrawal.

To those interested in personal growth, it becomes vital to examine and understand these forces. Instead of fighting or ignoring or trying to dispose of our defensive/protective behaviors, we can become aware of how they occur. To do this we can ask ourselves "what am I doing?" and "what is it doing for me?" The underlying assumption is that all behavior has a positive intention, understanding this intention is more useful than attempting to change the behavior. The intention to defend and the tendency to move against or away from are as important to our self-understanding as are the processes which move us towards more meaningful contact; each serves to support my person. Since both tendencies are functional the choice is in terms of which is more growthful.

Moving Toward - The Alternative Choice

As Gibb (1978) suggested, defensiveness is the natural tendency of the self to resist perceived threat or change induced by others. Yet is it necessary to engage in protective/defensive behavior? As indicated in the present research, selecting the alternative of "moving toward" rather than "away from" or "against" changes one's understanding of the nature of personal relating. Carl Rogers (1967) called the attitude which moves one toward openness and understanding with another "unconditional positive regard". This supportive moving toward attitude enhances one's relationships by enabling each person to feel acknowledged and understood. The conscious decision not to use defensive behaviors is possible once an understanding of the intentions and accompanying patterns of behavior is developed. As described in this study, knowing the general outcomes of the intention to defend/protect provide an opportunity for one to be more in control of behavior by acknowledging that "I have choice: I can move away from, against, or toward others."

The Intention to Understand/Learn

A common tendency when we reflect on an aspect of our relating that we don't like is to want to change it rather than to understand it. We often seek solutions rather than understanding when addressing our problems in living.

In not addressing the underlying source of a problem, our solutions tend to be ineffective beyond the immediate short-term gain. Symptoms may seem to disappear only to resurface in another manifestation. In our preoccupation with solving the problem, we are at best only superficially dealing with the personal issues inherent in the conflict. Rather than the end-gain, understanding is the means whereby we attain resolution in our relations. It is this deeper level of resolution which creates intimacy and meaningful personal contact. Through working toward mutual understanding of a problem situation we can develop consensual agreements. It is the process of our inter-relating which defines the quality of our relationships. The intention to understand oneself and the other through the process of interrelating is what is meant by being personal (Rogers, 1967).

Defining What One is Moving Away From

So often we define what we want in terms of what we don't want. By defining our wants in negative terms, we establish as our reference point something we are moving away from (Bandler and Grinder, 1982). We say we want to stop smoking or we want to not be so tense. But it's difficult to know where we are going if all we know is where we don't want to go. As indicated above, when we describe what we want in negative terms, our reference point is what we are moving away from. When we frame our perceptions in terms of moving away from being hurt, rejected, put-down or betrayed. This is clearly seen in the orientation of the co-researchers when they are protecting or defending themselves. When they think of being personal, do they remember experiences of comfort, connection and caring or of hurt, rejection and judgment? If a fear of negative consequences is foremost in their minds then we see that they enter their personal relating cautiously and well-defended. Much of how they perceive each situation is shaded by their past experience, their current needs, and their sense of self. This orientation does not help us to move towards being more personal. Re-orienting towards understanding one's way of being personal can provide a way out of this prediciment. Understanding is developed through increased self-awareness of present lived-experience.

Defining What One is Moving Towards

It is important to ask ourselves: "If we were not defending and protecting what would we be doing?" If we were being personal, what would we be experiencing? These questions tend to orient one in a more positive direction so that rather than moving away from ourselves we can move towards what we want. If we define what we want in positive terms then we provide ourselves with a reference point which we can move towards (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Being personal implies moving towards through learning and understanding. Being personal provides us with ways of developing relationships which reduce defensiveness and enhance understanding. The intention to understand requires developing an awareness of seeing the manner in which we frame our reality. Effectively exploring how we behave and how we feel about our relationships leads to the growth of an inner awareness that is vitally necessary for experiencing greater intimacy. The summary descriptions of being personal which follow outline what seem to be the essential factors for developing intimate relationships.

B. Summary: An Essential Phenomenological Description

The process of being personal, as described in this study, is characterized by the intention to learn and understand and the tendency to move towards others. Additonally the experience of relationship includes the underlying intentions and tendencies which inhibit or reduce the quality of my personal contact with others. It is clear from the preceding chapter that being personal as an interpersonal phenomenon includes forces which move us closer or more distant from others. We cannot enter into relations with others without revealing something of our selves or being affected by what others reveal to us. We can see from the data that people are reluctant to be personal with others because of fears related to exposure, abandonment, rejection, angry attacks, loss of control and the fear of losing one's individuality. As described in this study, we disclose far more about ourselves in personal relating when we are not protecting or defending ourselves.

In this study, I have attempted to understand the experience of being personal in terms of both the enabling and restraining patterns which have emerged from the research data. In the following statements I aim to describe what is essential to being personal.

> Being personal is a way of relating which makes possible deeper levels of intimacy.
>
> Being personal is a process of relating which occurs between us when I am open to understanding and learning about each of us.
>
> Being personal is a process which originates with my being and extends as we grow in relating with each other.
>
> Being personal is relating which does not require that I be other than who I am.
>
> Being personal is possible when I feel secure enough

in who I am to let others be who they are.

Being personal results in intimacy, understanding and mutual trust when expressing my personal truth.

Being personal involves taking responsibility for my intentions and actions, and for the effects I create in the world.

Being personal is being congruent and integral; that is, relating without trying to disguise or hide my inner thoughts, feelings and intentions.

Being personal means authentically responding from my internal needs and wants rather than responding to external demands and expectations (internal versus external locus of control).

Being personal involves sharing both my strength and my vulnerability.

Being personal means including the other in my world intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

Being personal means making the self and the other significant.

Being personal means letting go of the need to control the other and reducing the need for self-control.

The results of the present study reflect much of what Carl Rogers (1967) wrote about the quality of the interpersonal relationship. Through behavior which shows congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard, he stated that we can deal with the insincerities, the defensive exaggerations, the lies, the false fronts which characterize unfulfilling relationships. These defensive distortions drop away as we find that the only intent is to understand/learn, not judge. For Rogers, the dropping of defensiveness by one party leads to the further dropping of defensiveness by the other. As Milton Erickson (1980) identified a similar process in urging therapists to create the state of experience in themselves and then invite the other to join you.

Sometimes we are not aware of ourselves, our behavior, desires, intentions or motives. According to Maslow (1970), even without our conscious awareness, our behavior serves to satisfy some need or intention, either directly or indirectly. Maslow theorized that we endevour to form interpersonal relationships motivated by a need for belongingness; that is, feeling accepted and appreciated by others. As shown in the present study, when these needs are not met, feelings of rejection and isolation result with subsequent feelings of mistrust and suspicion towards others. Consistant with Maslow's needs for love and belonging, is the intention the learn/understand and the tendency to move towards more meaningful personal relating.

Jourard's view of the healthy personality and its relationship to self-disclosure exemplifies the position taken by Maslow's self-actualization model. According to Jourard's (1971) theory of self-disclosure, one necessary feature of the healthy personality is the ability to know and to disclose the real self. Self-knowing and authenticity in the present study emerged as themes which manifest in the tendency to move a person toward others. Conversely, Jourard indicated that the same processes which allow people to hide their true self from others also function to hide their unconscious from themselves. This tendency to protect/defend inhibits self-knowledge and healthy functioning unless, as pointed out in the present research, the person can become aware of these inhibiting behaviors and make choices to alter these defensive patterns.

Jack Gibb's (1978) theory describes processes whereby a person makes living in trust possible from self-sustained and self-directed changes in behavior patterns. Several assumptions of the Gibb (1978) theory are directly relevant to the present work. He stated that fear-defense levels manifest as depersonalization, role living, facade building and covert strategies for control which is similar to the structure of the intention to defend/protect. Like the intention to understand/learn, Gibb (1978) suggested that trust and low defense levels manifest as personal, intimate and non-role behavior; open transparent behavior; self-determining, assertive and actualizing behavior; and reciprocally-fulfilling, interdependent and 'with' behavior.

As in the present study, being personal for Gibb involves movement towards building trust and increasing personalization, openness, self-determination and interdependence.

C. Implications for Future Research

The Need for a Shift in Relationship Paradigm

One of the most significant problems in psychological practice today may be the absence of a pragmatic understanding and a philosophical framework of human relationships. For me the problem became clear as a result of the current existential and interpersonal issues of my clients in psychotherapy and my explorations in dealing with some of these issues. In spite of an increase in the availability and sophistication of psychological services in public institutions and private practice, incidents of stress, burnout, mental illness, sick leave, and deliquency are all on the increase.

My encounters with the current personal and social crises have inspired me to explore a new way of thinking, a way based on perceived experience rather than conceptual reality. Often I am guided by fundamental mind patterns which operate outside of my conscious awareness. The collective assumptions of my culture form one such layer of these mental processes. My paradigm for personal relationship forms another such layer of beliefs and attitudes which affect my thoughts, feelings, and behavioral responses. In so far as I take these assumptions to be reality, I am bound by them. What I believe determines much of what I think and do: the way I move, the way I respond, the way I think of myself, the way I see the world in general.

The basic assumptions I have towards life underlie the manner in which I approach relationships. These assumptions manifest through the ways I relate to other people either implicitly or explicitly. In my relations with others, I have a more or less consistent set of assumptions that I make about myself and other people. This set of assumptions which I bring to my relationships directly affects my ways of relating. This results in some of my relationships being rich and satisfying, while others tend to remain superficial and unfulfilling. The way I share (or withhold) myself greatly affects my experience of relatedness in the world both personally and professionally.

In the present work, the aim has been to develop an awareness and understanding of the process by which people let themselves be known to others, moving from superficial to more personal levels of contact. The work presupposes that it is through the quality of personal contact with another human being and the world in general that I come to know myself more fully. This acknowlegment and recognition of my relatedness can in turn provide a more meaningful experience of my being in the world.

The Context of the Psychotherapist

In psychology and psychotherapy, our basic assumptions about forming relationships tend to remain unscrutinized because the client and the therapist both share them. The therapist cannot extend the client beyond the areas in which he/she is also captive. A therapist whose own development and self-awareness have not brought him to a certain stage of self-understanding will often not be able to transmit that which is necessary for the client's growth. Teachers must teach by means of what they have become. Therapy therefore should not rest solely on techniques or theatrics but rather on the ability of the therapist to attend to and facilitate process, both the clients' and his own. To do this the therapist must know where he stands and what he stands for. It is the therapist's personal state of consciousness that is the context for the work: the teacher is the teaching. When the teacher is not congruent with the teaching the lesson is often questioned or devalued. This perhaps explains why therapuetic techniques themselves yield only limited and temporary results.

Koestenbaum (1981) describes two therapists who to their profession and the public seem eminently successful, both feel sucked dry by their patients and fear that they will in fact die if their anxious unconscious continues to respond as it has to the shadowy unconscious of some of their patients. Koestenbaum (1981) examined how the lack of a philosophical basis for psychotherapy creates problems for the practitioner:

> When technique has spent itself, when its usefulness is exhausted, there still remains a fragmented, aimless, and foundationless client-therapist relationship. The practitioners themselves have not found their direction, their hope, their meaning or security. Technique, especially when used well, nevertheless can lead both patient and practitioner to the very edge of a gaping abyss beyond which they cannot go. It is here that the psychosomatic symptom, the rash, and the psychological symptom, the suicidal depression, appear as defenses against the ultimate anxiety. To appreciate and manage this dreadful emptiness, a comprehensive philosophy, a deepened understanding of human existence and of being in general is required. (p.136)

The Context of the Client Population

A growing number of my clients have experienced major changes at some point in their lives: a marriage breakdown, the loss of a job, a serious illness, or any of a number of experiences that force people to examine and re-evaluate themselves. People who have put their energy into careers or raising a family question the meaning of their lives and go through crises that are both painful and difficult. For some, a crisis often becomes an opportunity to look inwards, open up new areas of their lives, to give life new meaning. Yet for others the learning inherent in a crisis is often clouded and overshadowed by an overwhelming discomfort and loss of control. The increase in anxiety and confusion is often suppressed or reduced by reverting to the old tried and true ways of being. The need for guidance during crisis is but one area of professional concern which begs for a new paradigm.

Living in a goal-oriented society, many of my clients are driven by ambition, achievement and the belief that more is necessarily better. Yet more and more they are saying, "So what?". They have attained much of the material things, the proverbial "carrots" which have been dangled before them as desireable goals, yet they feel a sense of emptiness and despair. Many of the young, unemployed people I work with see little opportunity to find their place in society, and have lost hope for their future. Hayward (1986) commented on this situation:

> As we turn to the evening news or read the newspaper and the penetrating analyses of my world today, we begin to feel anxiety and despair, anger and frustration. I am warned of possible nuclear catastrophe, of imminent ecological collapse, of the

> pending death of my species. Acid rain pollutes the air; thousands of people a day are slaughtered in dozens of wars around the world; heart disease and cancer, stress and mental illness are increasing; my best students are losing heart in their studies and committing suicide or dropping out of school. These warnings are urgent. (p. 5)

In face of these realities, the increased use of drugs in society may well reflect an attempt to suppress this sense of despair and purposelessness by substituting heightened sensation for meaning. I see a rise in fundamentalist religion as an example of the attempt to return to values of the past. This trend points to the maintaining of meaning through dogmatic adherence to a given set of rules and beliefs.

The Context of Psychology

The scope of psychotherapy is now increasingly concerned with the problems of existential suffering, the traditional domain of religion. Increasingly my fellow psychotherapists are called upon to deal with the human need for meaning and the symptoms which arise from boredom, depression and despair. Religion, which formerly defined meaning for many has been replaced by a scientific world-view which is manifest through the practice of psychology.

The shortcomings of today's psychological practice are inherent in the conceptual foundations that support current psychological and educational theory and research. Western science attempts to understand human beings in a framework based on scientific materialism in which meaning is arbitrary and purpose is nonexistent. It is clear that the scientific vision of an orderly, mechanical, indifferent universe can provide little insight into the problems of human existence. A psychological paradigm based on the physical scientific model is far too narrow to encompass the problems in living which face modern man. In my practice I am faced with problems which require an extending of my limited perspectives of personal relating.

Human Science - a Shift in Paradigm

Phenomenologists (Husserl, 1962, Giorgi, 1970) suggest that before we can understand reality, we must be aware of what is there, what we actually experience, instead of starting with theories or concepts and sifting reality through a preformed screen. As a practicing phenomenologist, I enter my world by acknowledging that I am influenced by conditioned frames of reference. I need to learn to be aware in the present moment, to see, to explore and to interact purposefully. The basic goal of understanding people's experience and meaning can be attained through an intersubjective approach to inquiry which focuses on process over content and provides a necessary, desired shift from the detached objective orientation of most traditional approaches to psychotherapy.

The basic shift in paradigmatic philosophical assumptions forwarded by the human science approach can be used to illuminate both my personal and professional relationships. It is through this possibility of shifting my relationship paradigm that many of the above-mentioned problems in living can begin to be addressed in a more humane and effective manner.

Being Personal

> There is increasing scientific evidence that man's physical and psychological health are profoundly affected by the degree to which he has found meaning, direction, and purpose in his existence. Some of this purpose and meaning arise in man's relationships with his fellows. I suspect a man's life begins to lose meaning when he becomes estranged from his fellows; when he distrusts others so much he misleads them into thinking they know him when, in fact, he knows that they do not and cannot.
> (Jourard, 1971, p. ix)

In the mystical and religious traditions, this point of view was deeply rooted in an implicit concern with the issues of human suffering and existence. Human beings were seen as ignorant and unaware of their true nature which in turn led them to lives of pain and futility. Mysticism "does not offer therapy in the usual sense of the word, but achieving the goal of mysticism - experiencing the real self - is said to cure human suffering because its very basis is removed." (Diekman, 1985 ,p. 73)

A choice that confronts every one at every moment is

> ... shall we permit our fellows to know us as we now are, or shall we remain enigmas, wishing to be seen as persons we are not ... This protection comes at a steep price ... when we succeed in hiding our being from others, we tend to lose touch with our real selves. This loss of self contibutes to illness in its myriad forms. (Jourard, 1971, p.vii)

The philosophical point of departure for future study of personal relating must be fundamentally derived from the Latin roots of the word "education" (ex - ducare) - to lead out from (Webster's). If the practice of psychology is going to effectively address existential issues, then practitioners must learn how "to lead out from". The assumption is that each person has the potential of knowing himself by leading himself out from his own ignorance. The purpose of the therapist then is to guide and support clients in recognizing themselves.

> When being fully present in life, each person has an impact upon others, and others have impact upon them. By recognizing and acknowledging this impact, each person defines him/herself. By understanding this impact, each person broadens his/her range of choices of action. Through action, each person participates in life. By being willing to share the self, each person engages in the possibility of change, both within the self and the other. These are the elements involved in all helping relationships, be they personal or professional. (Wong & McKeen, 1986)

In sum there is a need to examine the experience of being personal in more detail both within the therapuetic/ educational context and in everyday interpersonal situations. The breakdown of marriage and basic family structure draws much attention to the need for a greater understanding of the nature of relationship. Much of what is presented in the current literature and in practice is theoretical and abstract in its examination and treatment of relationship. The absence of research on understanding the lived-experience of relationship provides the impetus for future study in the fields in psychotherapy, psychology, organizational development and education.

D. Personal Meaning

In beginning this study, I was motivated by the desire to understand more of the meaning of my personal relationships. My interest arose out of my work in the field of communication as a practicing psychologist /educator. For many years I have given workshops on interpersonal relating and have been committed to expanding my understanding of how people effectively develop and maintain meaningful relationships.

My personal growth started with my willingness to risk being personal in the year preceeding the work on this thesis. I decided that I needed to take a deeper look at myself, how I was relating with myself and with others. I enrolled in a week-long workshop entitled "Come Alive" which helped me to see how much of my energy I was blocking from creative and meaningful expression both personally and relationally. I proceeded to participate in two, one-month workshops: "Phase 1 - Self-Awareness" and "Phase 11 - Self and Other". From these workshops, from my own teaching and my dissertation research, I have come to a more complete and integrated understanding of my own personal relating.

What I was not aware of at the time I started this thesis was how much of my life has been spent in fear. I see how my fear has at times left me confused and blocked in my personal and intimate relations. I see how my expectations and frustration have been turned to anger and resentment as I blamed others for my hurt and aloneness. Insulated by my sarcasm, criticism and cynicism I wondered why there were no people close to me. My isolation turned to despair and disillusionment. My anger turned inward became self-hate. No one understood or even cared to try. I so wanted to be understood, but as one friend said, "You don't want to be understood; you want people to think the way you do." My sense of righteousness pushed people away from me.

I now see how my fear blocked me in my relating with others. I also see how thoroughly disguised and deeply hidden my fears were. As I became aware of how often my intentions has been to protect myself, I understand how difficult it has been to get close to people. Each layer of personal awareness and understanding has brought me closer to my self. Learning about myself brings me to see that I do unto others as I do unto myself: If I am caring and compassionate with myself then I know how to be that way with others, but if I am not loving towards myself how can I possibly be loving with others?

As a result of this study I see an increasing need to attend to my own personal relationships. From my work on this thesis, I am finally feeling a deeper sense of integration and congruence with what I teach and how I live my life. Developing an awareness of the nature of my various relationships brings me to an understanding of myself both personally and professionally. By being present with each person, looking at what is currently occurring and expressing what I feel with them has help to enrich the quality of my interpersonal contact. The aim of my growing awareness is to notice what prevents meaningful contact and intimacy in my personal relating. The learning from this awareness then provides an experiential basis for my teaching and practice as a psychologist. I see that as a result of this work, I have become a student of my own behavior. It has been this shift from accumulating knowledge towards learning from my lived experience which sets the stage for personal growth and wisdom.

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APPENDIX 1

Imaginative Variation

The following sample of imaginative variation illustrates one of the self-reflective procedures used in unravelling themes. In this procedure, I outlined various themes extracted from one of the transcripts. I then examined each theme as if it were coming from my own experience of being personal in relation with another, in this case the reader. I felt confident that by bringing my discourse to a more personal level I could more readily experience and understand what it is like to be personal.

Example One - Being Personal in Relating to the Reader

/ self-affirming / As I write, I am trying to express my ongoing experiencing of thoughts, feelings and bodily responses in order to make our relating more personal. As I look back over what I am saying I feel a sense of recognition and acknowledgement, knowing that you are reading this passage. Your willingness to be available to take the time to engage with me confirms and validates my sense of purpose and worth. How isolated and disconnected I might feel if all of these personal expressions were not received.

Our relationship of expression and reception supports and encourages me to be more disclosing. It is perhaps your mere presence which sets the context for me to see myself reflected in my writing. Before I chose to write directly to you I was unsure of myself and what I wanted to say. Yet as you become a part of my world, I find that you become a reference point. My intentions become more clear as my expression now has direction. I am relating with you. It is this complementary relationship of writer and reader, sender and receiver which allows me to be more aware of myself both as writer and as person.

/ authentic core / To remain true to myself, I need to maintain a sense of personal integrity. To be able to talk with you without need for mask or role. I want to be able to tell you my wants and needs, my likes and dislikes, my emotions and my thoughts so that you might have an intimate knowing of who I am.
I begin questioning whether my words really evoke what I am trying to express as they seem somewhat removed and analytical. My current uncertainty is perhaps a more accurate description of my experience. And I feel concerned that if I don't present a mask of competence then my work will be devalued. Yet who I am is someone who is both competent and struggling, authentic and masked, vulnerable and defended. The question then becomes one of how open I will allow myself to be with you. Do I value my congruence enough to express it at all costs or do I conform to what I believe to be more relationally acceptable?

/ knowing self / I become more aware by observing myself in my relating with you. As a student of my own behavior, I learn from my goofs, failures and mistakes which manifest as I interact with you. Perhaps you are not privy to all the unedited expressions that precede what you are now reading but suffice it to say that much self-reflection underlies what is written.
I come to know myself more clearly through communicating with you. There is something about the process of communicating, in this case writing, which brings forward a clarification and an understanding of parts of myself which would otherwise remain unexamined. By representing my experience to you through language I find new expressions of my being. If I were not to be engaging with you I would not need to extend or challange myself to be understood. My experience would require no representation, no translation into a common languaging. It is in the context of this communicative relationship that I can know myself more fully.
I reveal who I am not only so that you may know me but that I might come to know myself better. The more I am open, the more openness becomes a part of who I am. The more I withhold, the more I contain; the less I express, the more I become disconnected from myself and from you.

/ openness / I make myself accessible by extending myself to you. It is an attitude, a stance, a posture that I value. It is a way of being with you.
Our relating is currently maintained through my willingness and ability to be open with you as I acknowledge my present experiencing and I invite you to join me in my expression of it. It is this invitation to

freely join, to enter my world that creates the possibility of us becoming closer to each other by acknowledging our similarities and appreciating our differences. The belief that we can co-exist by allowing our differences to clearly define who we are as unique beings rather than to create opposition is perhaps a poignant example of true openness.

/ sharing, expressing / I tell you about myself, disclosing, uncovering, unfolding, offering an experience of who I am to you. I show and reveal myself by verbalizing, by transforming into words my thoughts and emotions in order to communicate. In another situation a look on my face, my choice of words or intonation might indicate my mood or emotion clearly.
It is the way that I am expressing myself, the how of my communication, that holds as much if not more of the meaning than the mere content. The relating happens between the words through the meanings and values inherent in the emotional and attitudinal quality of our interchange.
As you read you no doubt have some sense of who I am, a picture or a feeling of who is writing, of what kind of person the writer is. What does what the writer has shared evoke in you about the experience of being personal?

/ understanding the other / I assume that you are listening, trying to comprehend the nature or meaning of what it is like to be personal. I trust that you are beginning to realize or grasp what meaning it has for you. By acknowledging, recognizing and understanding my attempts at personal relating you might become more empathic or curious about the experience of being personal.

This first example is primarily descriptive while the second example provides a more interpretive view of how the emerging themes were examined. It can be noted that the vehicle of self-reflection on the themes was used as an initial step in the unfolding process and then was no longer utilized. It was my feeling that fitting the data into this procedure had begun to shape or direct our understanding in a particular way. Although this lens of seeing had provided a useful means for gaining additional insight into the experience of being personal, alternative viewpoints were employed to vary our understanding. My contention as a phenomenological researcher is that we must view a phenomenon from many viewpoints rather than attempt to sift our data through a preformed screen.

This present approach presumed that for each set of data there could emerge an appropriately unique and illuminating variations in methodology which were consistent with the objectives of phenomenology. A willingness to be flexible in methodology while remaining true to the goal of describing and explicating the essence to the phenomenon was considered important. With this goal in mind, I needed to attend to the process integrity of the procedures I utilized to investigate the phenomenon. Therefore the criteria for using a phenomenolgical procedure was whether it illuminated and a facilitated fuller understanding of certain aspects of the data, rather than how well it could be used uniformly with all the data.

APPENDIX 2

The Process-Pattern-Structure Method

The following is an example to the process-pattern-structure method. The balance of the themes from M's protocol can be viewed from an imaginative variation derived from the writer's own experience. This experience is written with the aim of providing a concrete example of the themes of "needs from the other", "comfort", "fear", "judgments", "put-down", "rejected", and "objectifying the other". Emerging from the context of imaginative variation the patterns and structures are identified and then discussed.

The following is a fictional account of interpersonal relating where a professor provided me with feedback on a piece of work related to the topic of being personal. In this situation I find that communication takes on a different quality for each of us and varies in terms of our willingness and ability to be personal. It is given that each of us relates from our own set of assumptions and that what is presented has been experienced through our own conceptual filters. The intention here is not so much to evaluate whether the interactions are personal or not, but rather to look at what can be learned (meaning derived) about being personal from this example of interpersonal relating.

Context

The feedback received came in the form of a type written page, which at the time of this writing represents the only contact we have as yet been able to arrange. My preference given the nature of my study is for a personal face to face encounter through which the content and the process of my work can be mutually explored. The question which initiated an exploration of this specific interaction concerns the issue of being personal vs being in role. Given this context I will begin by describing my experience of this communication.

Process

I read the first line, which reads "Overall, the draft is simply too thin." and begin to feel as though I haven't provided enough substance. I start to question the quality of my work, the effort and thought which comprised it. I begin to feel inadequate as I read that there is a "wealth of literature on the question of 'meaning' ... 'method' ... 'epistemology' ... yet the essential matters of the draft appear as if by immaculate conception". If only I ... yes but ... recriminations and rationalizations begin to surface as I struggle between self-criticism and justification. I project disapproval and disappointment in the last line of the feedback. "I suspect (and hope) that there is more to this thrust than what is reflected in this draft." In the end I am feeling misunderstood and defensive.

I "try on" what has been offered as critical evaluation in an attempt to see the value of the comments. I acknowledge the "looseness" and "evident off-the-top of-the-headness" of the draft. I find the suggestions regarding literature review, methodology, and statement of problem useful in terms of the organization of the proposal. Yet I seem preoccupied with my perception of the tone of the communication. My defensiveness (ego response) begins to manifest through my rationalizations. I dismiss the feedback as it is obviously not expressing an understanding of what I am trying to do, as much as it is expressing how I should be doing it. I do not feel recognized or acknowledged in what I am expressing. This is not a personal encounter but rather one between student and teacher. I begin to wonder whether an academic hierarchy precludes the possibility of being personal. Can the message (feedback) to the person (researcher/student) from the person (professor/academic) be less impersonal/political?

Not being able to engage, to make meaningful personal contact, surfaces as an ongoing pattern in my relating. I know that I have felt frustrated in my attempts to make contact in a more personal way. This perhaps adds to my uncertainty as to how to respond to the feedback. Do I respond as a person or as a researcher/student? Do I try to engage in a way where my person and my researcher are seen as an inseparable whole? Can or should I be personal with another when they define our relating as professional/academic?

I find myself challenged to personalize this interaction, to understand what the meaning of his communication is for me. I believe there is some part of me which is triggered by what I perceive as criticism or disapproval. I find that in face of criticism I tend to respond in two polarized ways: either I collapse and take on the judgments and become self-critical or I fight and mobilize to show myself in a way that indicates that the appraisal is incorrect. I am aware of withdrawing, avoiding contact and feeling unfinished and therefore still engaged with both of these mechanisms.

What is emerging out of this self-reflection is a clarity in viewing my experience and sense of understanding the direction in which I need to proceed. Relating in a personal way is essential to my study and I see that I need to find ways to communicate this to the others with whom I am in the process of working.

Patterns

/ judges self in face of other / feels not good enough, questions self-worth, feels inadequate, has recriminations, self-criticizes, takes it on

/ supports self in face of judgments/ rationalizes, dismisses, justifies, defends, withdraws, avoids contact, fights and mobilizes to show self

/ desires improved personal relating/ is frustrated with quality of contact, lacks contact, displays ongoing pattern, is unfinished, does not feel acknowledged or recognized in personal expression, makes meaningful personal contact, sees possibility of being personal, becomes less impersonal

/ confused and cautious in relating/ uncertain how to interpret, preoccupied with tone

/ tries to make meaning of experience/ is challenged to understand meaning of communication, tries it on, acknowledges suggestions as useful

/ imagines other is judging/ disapproving, percieves criticism, encounters judgments, meets incorrect appraisal, experiences disappointment, feels misunderstood

Structure

The response from a professional/academic perspective is to examine what is presented in terms of certain a priori scholastic criteria of rigor and scope of thought. In this process the individual sees the written proposal through a predetermined lens and judges it on the merits of a given criteria. The written feedback suggests literary resources and a need to provide "sustained recognition of this powerful literature", inclusion of properly cited references and a bibliography, clarification of some misconceptions, and a format for refining the presentation. These comments from the context of critical ~~evaluation~~ and valuable academic guidance are without question.

When viewed in the context of being personal this process of making judgments can create separation both for the person receiving the judgments and the person who is making them. The question at hand is not whether to judge or not, but rather what do we do with the judgments we make and receive. If the judgments create distance for either person and the desired state is one of contact, then our relating becomes strained. We objectify the other by withholding our reactions and not coming forward by sharing our thoughts and feelings. We avoid contact by withdrawing because we fear more rejection. We defend our position by rationalizing that it doesn't matter. Or we feel guilty that we aren't good enough and if we only tried harder we would be accepted. Or we become angry and proceed to blame the other. In face of these possible reactions the question arises as to how one makes personal a way of relating which has become impersonal.

The patterns which emerge in a situation of perceived judgment indicate that this individual tends to judge self when he feels judged by others, finds ways to support himself in face of his confusion, and wants to understand and improve his relating with the other. Let us look more carefully at the nature of judgment within which we may find clues to the question of being personal.

The process of judgment makes it extremely difficult to listen for what we do when we think we are listening to take in the words, translate them into something that we know and are familiar with and then agree or disagree. If the words fit our structures, our beliefs, what we are comfortable with, the things we know, then the person is judged to be "wise" and we agree. If the words do not fit our structures, our beliefs, etc., then the person is judged to be not wise and we disagree. But when we are either agreeing or disagreeing, we are not listening. To listen there must be an openness, an innocence, a putting away of old ideas so the possibility of the fresh can come in.

Gibb (1978) outlines the behavior characteristics of defensive and supportive climates. A defensive climate is characterized by evaluation, control, strategy, neutrality, superiority and certainty. On the other hand, supportive climates are characterized by description, problem orientation, spontaneity, empathy, equality and provisionalism. Defensiveness can interfere with communication and make it difficult to convey ideas clearly, which creates problems in effectively moving towards a growthful relationship.

In being personal, judgments need to be acknowledged and shared with the intention of clearing away what is keeping the two individuals separate. The process of clearing is one of making personal what has been objectified and depersonalized.

In this context the student-professor relationship can also be viewed as political. Political relating is also impersonal because each individual's experience is edited and presented in ways which are considered safe. This power-based relating also creates a sense of separation in that what is offered is a guarded, restricted, calculated presentation of self. Dominance or submission, which means to either be in authority or to obey, cuts off the possibility of being personal.

Being political is impersonal and makes individuals into objects. To objectify the individual "as a member of the supervisory committee" whose relating is dictated by a "role" is to create problems in personal relating. This process of objectifying the self also presupposes an objectification of the other as "student". Relating from role does not provide possibility for authentic personal sharing. Being personal occurs when there is a sense of equality and an openness to explore the deeper questions of our relating with each other as they emerge through our being together. By making explicit and bringing forward our thoughts, feelings, and perceptions we become more vulnerable and therefore open to seeing ourselves as human beings.

In this procedure I utilized my self-reflective responses to the emerging themes and patterns as a means of enriching and extending my understanding of the phenomena. My aim was to integrate psychological observation with personal understanding in order to present a synthesis of the results.

APPENDIX 3

Illustrative Narrative

In beginning to orient you to the co-researchers descriptions, I have chosen to introduce the process of being personal in a form that Alapack (1975) called the dramatic parable, that Wertz (1985) refered to as illustrative narrative and that Husserl (1962) called imaginative variation. The narrative is an attempt to synthesize the meanings of the life-stories gathered from the co-researchers. The narrative provides a vehicle for capturing the essential meanings of the process of being personal and brings them to life for the reader. The following narrative is an illustrative description of two people which is a composite of the actual concrete variations derived from all of the transcripts. The use of the narrative form is an attempt to move away from the tedious and often confusing tabular methods of presenting phenomenological data by engaging the reader experientially in the research findings.

They

Separate in their own life-worlds, they are two people who want a quality of contact which is seen as desirable and at the same time frightening. What is this desire/need for personal contact that moves them towards another? And the fear! What is it that is so terrifying that they become immobilized to the point of withdrawing or moving against the very object of their desire?

They meet as adults, men and women coming together. Each brings a history of experience and perception of personal relating to this encounter. Unlike adolescents who are ready to risk flowing out to each other, who are eager to relate in new ways, these adults are apprehensive and guarded. Memories of past relationships, of the initial promises of love or friendship which turned out to be disappointing and painful, are carried into the present. Jaded, wounded, withdrawn, and fearful, their experiences with others have left them cautious. Their past, lived-through involvements have caused them to protect who they are in various ways which manifest in their current interpersonal relating.

Will they permit the other to know them as they are or will they remain enigmas, to be seen as someone other than who they essentially are? One wonders what has happened to their openness and spontaneity. Has it been replaced by a manufactured image, which conceals and masks their authentic being? They withhold their true being from the other to protect against the criticism or rejection they have felt in the past.

With each new encounter there is that familiar feeling in the pit of their stomachs. It feels like fear, yet could be excitement. They step into the unknown, the possibility of new relationship, the freshness of relating to someone whom they feel drawn to. Is it curiosity, sexual attraction, romantic ideal, emotional need or merely chance which moves them towards the other? Is this someone with whom they can share their thoughts, feelings, hopes and dreams? Maybe this time it will be different. This might be someone who can help them feel happy in their life, who will free them from the pain, anguish and strife of their life-world. This person holds out the promise of a satisfying relationship in which they hope to find a replacement for what they don't have and don't like about their lives.

The feelings that are aroused are somehow different from the complacency they feel with someone they already know well. Is it that they trust the familiar and feel more comfortable or is it that they are bored with the familiar? Is it that they have shared so much or so little that anything new is really just a new slant on an old pattern and the thrill is gone? Is it that they have felt secure or played safe in the longstanding relationship and they need not fear rejection, criticism and abandonment? Have they guarded so well, that even though they have known someone for ten years they still feel like strangers? Have they concealed themselves from the other so well that they have lost touch with who they really are?

He

He dreams romantically of some contented day, having it made, in some idyllic relationship, home and job. He imagines two people who stay at the same jobs all their lives, have found out who they are and love their lives. Yet in reality he sees problems in attaining or even desiring this stable state. He has grown cynical; he knows there is no magic, no savior, no rest without great effort.

> From my dreary drained position of waiting for it to happen, of paralyzed fear, cowardice, paranoia and despair -- what is the use, I've never been satisfied of course I can only create more self-hate, more isolation, loneliness and despair. Of course! Maybe my old way is finally dying. Maybe I see a little light in all this struggling. I haven't got it made -- I never will -- but I'm gaining some grasp of what this living in relatedness is all about. It scares the hell out of me. It is not easy! It even terrifies me, but this struggle really is life-death. (Transcript)

He feels that there is no inherent meaning in life other than his individually defined sense of happiness and growth which he experiences in his relationships with others. He feels that if he grows enough in the right ways, reads the right books or finds the right teacher that everything will be improved. His problems will be resolved. His life will be happy and most of all stable. It is a position of hope which helps maintain his search, the belief that the answer is just around the corner. From course to course, job to job, book to book and person to person his life goes on waiting, searching for the answer.

At times he really does not believe that the quality of relating that he needs is possible to attain. He finds frustration in his personal relating with others as is exemplified in the following journal excerpt about his relationship with his brother.

> J has lived in Victoria since I saw him three years ago. He has taught me a lot of idealism, skills for getting on in the world, how to grow up, for he is my older brother. He is a man I love and with whom I want to share. I discover J to be a beautiful simple man. He is light and alive. He is great fun. But he is personally unaware. I try to share my life with him. He wants to play chess. I tell him about my heart, my guts, my brain. He doesn't respond. I ask him about his life. He doesn't know how to respond. A cloud hangs over our friendship. My judgements are harsh. I need him to relate like me to validate my experience. Without this I grow cynical of this mere shell of a person. (Transcript)

He finds it difficult to be personal and draws more into himself. He feels reserved, uneasy and unwilling to disclose. He sinks into fear and dispair.

> I am afraid. I am afraid. I am afraid.
> My anger, suppressed, calcifies to "what's the use".
> I give up, it doesn't really matter.
> Somewhere out of all this experienced darkness,
> a new sense of worth evolves.
> Anger, fire in my system.
> The impetus to reach out, to claim my own.
> The impetus to reach out in the risk of being
> personal ... How I've withheld, I don't believe!
> Not just from others but from myself.
> Off in nether world, unpresent, non-fucking reactive
> much less non-disclosing.
> Life is relatedness.

Death is the loss of relatedness. (Transcript)

He fears that he will be judged. His fear of judgement (except his own which comes so easily) is very deep and remains a recurring obstacle in being personal. At times he wants to hide, to make himself small, quiet and inconspicuous. In his journal he writes of his struggle to relate at a personal level.

> I am afraid to let myself be known
> In my attempt to be personal I am filled with fear.
> Fear
> Tightness
> Being closed
> What will they find out?
> If only I can maintain the image
> I will be safe...
> I will be me
> Image
> Maintain it at all costs.
> To them
> To myself.
> Needing desperately to be open and connecting others.
> Hesitant to open myself up to do this.
> This is my struggle. (Transcript)

His potential thoughts, feelings, wishes and fantasies know no bounds, save those set by his perception and personal history. He feels he has something to hide and sees others as a threat. He fears that they might learn his secrets or that if he is unguarded he might expose his areas of weakness and vulnerability. His fear of others and his own self-structure make it difficult for him to acknowledge or disclose the entire breadth and depth of his inner experience to himself and others. He seems obliged, rather, to hide much of his real ongoing spontaneous inner experience from himself and from others.

She

She is hopeful that she can learn new ways of relating as a means of improving the quality of her life. She believes that if she can understand herself more fully, her thoughts, feelings, patterns of behavior, then she will be able to develop the intimate connection that she so desperately longs for.

> My ability and willingness to be personal determines how intimate and connected I can be with myself and others. It determines the quality of my life. Every human has the desire to be personal, but personal is frightening and risky at times. It is possible to learn how to be more personal, to become conscious of it - one of the most important factors is to learn to become present, stay present and be curious about the other as well as the self. (Transcript)

She does not hesitate. She is curious about life, about people, about herself. She has recently made her personal development the central focus in her life. She sees herself as loving and caring and wants to share herself with another. Her sense of what it means to be personal keeps enlarging.

> I realize, usually in retrospect, that I have missed personal contact with the other. I have been mostly with myself, with the other as a mirror rather than seeing the other person. At times it appears I am merely waiting to begin talking again, formulating what I will say next rather than listening. Or I am "pushing" for personal contact, trying to be personal for the sake of being personal, rather than simply interested in the other and/or wanting to share who I am. I get stuck. Being personal can't be pushed, must just happen.

She realizes that personal contact includes being present, not just in a verbal, self-revealing style but with a listening presence. Contact is established not only by reaching out but through being receptive and listening with an open heart.

> My gateway to myself is my ability, my willingness to be personal with others. Relatedness is my pathway, to be at one with myself and therefore at one with the universe. So much of my life I have spent convincing myself of my "independence" - "I don't need anybody else"; "I can make it on my own". I have proved it over and over again. Yet what is this emptiness I feel? Now I recognize that I have proved I can make it on my own and I no longer have a need to prove it. Is my capacity in "being alone against the world" a sign of my competence in my aloneness or incompetence in relationship? I wonder if I can make it with another, whether I can really connect? My quest is for connection. I want to connect. (Transcript)

She has been successful in separating herself from others and as a result has tended to lose touch with her real self. She has often felt misunderstood and therefore withholds her true feelings and intentions. She has tried to protect herself from criticism and rejection and in so doing has moved towards her aloneness. She has often been preocuppied with how others see her. She is now directed towards understanding her relateness with others as a way of coming to know herself more fully. She wants to know and be known.

They

From their earliest experiences, they have developed and maintained certain feelings and attitudes about themselves and about others. These underlying feelings and attitudes and the ways in which they share (or don't share) them has greatly determined the nature and quality of their relationships. Like most people they have little or no conscious awareness of how they relate. They form relationships without a sense of conscious choice. In the past this has lead them into relationships which have at times been destructive and hurtful rather than supportive and growthful. These relationships have been laden with breakdowns in communication, emotional and/or physical abuse, frustration, internal loneliness, boredom, depression and self/mutual hatred.

Their experiences in relating have brought out the best and the worst in each of them. While they have tended to relate in certain characteristic ways, each relationship they have formed has initiated different kinds of relating. Different aspects of themselves have come into action with each human encounter.

APPENDIX 4

Bracketing Presuppositions

Developing an awareness of the beliefs I bring to a given situation and how those beliefs limit my seeing is necessary for understanding myself both personally and professionally. What I am attempting to do is to look at how the assumptions of my personal paradigm cut off learning and block the discovery of the newness of the moment. Over the past twenty years I have been involved in experiencing many methods and processes useful in assisting me to break out of my limited frameworks and belief systems and allowing me to experienco other ways of functioning. Gestalt, Encounter, Client Centered Therapy, Neuro-linguistic Programing and Eriksonian Hypnotherapy, to name a few, represent areas of my professional training which have created new frames of reference and ways of understanding myself and my relating with others. I have complemented my professional training with body-oriented approaches such as Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, Psychophysical Method, Rolfing, Trager and Riechian Bodywork which have helped me to develop an understanding of how my body is an intregral part of my psychological state. Storytelling, theatre improvisation, corporeal mime, mask, voice, and dance training have served to develop a curiosity and a willingness to step into the unknown and explore the possible. The following is a summary of some of the beliefs that I have developed out of these varied experiences.

I believe that awareness is movement. To learn and to grow I must carefully attend to what I am doing and how I am doing it. For example, in a crisis I am limited, I have only one option. I am doing what I am doing because it is the best (only) alternative I have available. For choice to occur I need to step out of the situation so I can see what is happening. Increasing awareness by taking the meta-position frees me from the confines of my self-imposed limited conceptualization of the situation and allows for other possibilities to be considered. It is through increasing my awareness of myself, my behavior and my effects on others that I can learn and develop as a person in the context of my relations with others.

Action speaks louder than words. Who you are speaks so loud I can't hear what you're saying. In my relationships and in my work, I believe that there is more meaning in what people do than in what they say. I believe that individuals' intentions are best understood in terms of their actions and in responses they elicit from others. The meaning of their communication is determined by the response they get.

Experiential knowing (wisdom) is more valued than the accumulation of facts and information (knowledge).

In my daily living it is my doing/acting that affects my image of myself and my relating with others. When I am feeling defensive I do not act. My energy becomes blocked. What stops or blocks me are my inappropriate actions (expressions), my inaction (depressions), my lack of awareness (not open to senses, relating out of habit and belief) and my lack of clarity about the quality of contact I seek (not knowing what I want). My fear of my own behavior has to do with the concern that I won't survive the event. Catastrophic expectations and memories of past disasters inhibit my personal relating. These fears are from the past, from remembered situations which directly affect my experience in the present.

In 1976 I became involved in a dance form called Contact Improvisation, which employs a point of physical contact as the medium for communication. Determination of the movement's direction flows through a point of meeting where weight, energy and impulse are freely exchanged. This training serves as a metaphor for my work with people. Establishing contact (that is, sensory impact, physical and visual involvement) is the first step in developing rapport. I attempt to develop a point of emotional, intellectual and experiential contact as the medium for communication and learning. Determination of the therapuetic/educational direction flows through the point of contact where awareness, perception and experience are mutually explored and freely exchanged. The nature of the meeting is one of equality not control, of process not product and of exploration not prescription. In order for contact to occur, there must be a sense of communion, connection and sharing. An implicit trust in myself, the other and our ability to respond to the next moment underlies our interaction. Milton Erickson calls this attitude the utilization approach. As one of my acting teachers used to say, "Can you say yes to the next moment? Because when you say 'no' you stop the scene and block the flow of the process". The task then becomes one of accepting and acknowledging everything as it occurs and utilizing it to move towards learning and understanding.

My personal state of consciouness creates the climate for my relationships, my work and my research. The method is one of being aware of what is happening, by setting aside personal biases and preconceptions in order to make myself available to respond. As a psychologist, my leadership does not rest soley on techniques and theatrics but rather on my ability to pay attention, to facilitate process and to clarify conflicts. Knowing where I stand and what I stand for requires continuously coming to new understandings, given changes in context. This self-reflective attitude towards understanding the process of how things work is an implicit part of the present research.

My personal philosophy is simple. I accept what is in front of me without wanting the situation, person or task to be other than what it is. Things proceed more quickly and easily if I stop putting so much effort into looking for results. The process of learning and understanding is a end in itself. Besides, working against the flow of things only sets up resistance. Real learning happens when I understand how a situation is emerging and constantly changing within the context of its own ecology. The following questions serve to contexualize my relationship to the study of being personal.

1. Why did I choose to study this topic at a personal/ professional development workshop?

The environmental context of this study is a residential educational centre called PD seminars. The experiential orientation towards personal and professional development ensured that participants would be active participants in their own learning process. The psychological environment as exemplified by the following comments from the group leaders, Dr. B. Wong and Dr. J. McKeen, provided an educational climate consistent with the aims and objectives of a study on personal relating.

The following statements are extracted from their brochures an capture the essence of their philosophical perspective.

> The educational philosophy is fundamentally from the Latin roots of the word "education" (ex - ducare) - to lead out from. It involves the assumption that each person has the potential of knowing him/herself, to be able in life situations to make the choices that will best enhance growth and meaning. The individual is the active agent, in contrast to most formal education in which the individual is 'taught' what is considered appropriate.
>
> Each person constructs his/her life through a series of assumptions (belief systems), most of which are learned from others through the developmental stages and enforced by the society in which the person lives. Thus, most people see the world through glasses of other's making ... Each person needs to know his/her own assumptions about life and be able to share them. Such an act ... becomes at the same time an act of assertion of the self as well as an act of sharing of the self. This is where we believe that intimacy (closeness) truly exists.
>
> It is assumed that all personality growth and development occurs in the context of relationships ... thus the bias of a group process oriented learning environment where the possibility of many varied relationships are available.
>
> When being fully present in life, each person has an impact upon others, and others have impact upon him/her.
> By recognizing and acknowledging this impact, each person defines him/herself. By understanding this impact, each person broadens his/her range of choices /action. Through action, each person participates in life. By being willing to share the self, each person engages in the possibility of change, both within the self and the other. These are the elements involved in all helping relationships, personal and professional.

2. How might my personal inclinations and predispositions influence and/or bias how and what I am investigating?

Listed below are the presuppositions which I bring to this study:

The basic assumptions I have towards life underlie the manner in which I approach relationships. These assumptions manifest through the ways I relate to other people either implicitly or explicitly. Most of the time I am not aware of my assumptions. Yet as I become aware of the assumptions which I bring to my relationships I begin to understand how these assumptions lead to varied ways of relating. The following is a list of life assumptions which I wrote as part of the New Horizons program and which will serve to contextualize some of the presuppositons that I bring to the present study:

I am willing and able to survive what my existential reality presents.
I create my own meaning in life.
I experience my spirit and sense of unity-consciouness thru my experiences of communion with nature, Taoism.
Each day is my life and each moment I am a full expression of my being.
Those who aren't busy being born are a busy dyin'.
I see the presence of god in myself and others.
I have the choice to accept and utilize what I experience, to say yes to the emerging moment.

I can learn and gain wisdom through an experiential knowing of my lived-experiences.

I am curious and challenged to understand my being and doing.

First time tragedy, second time farce. Humor is letting go.

I am alone and isolated, yet I have the skills to make meaningful contact with others.

I am noticed, yet I often feel unseen for who I am.

I am self-sufficient, have the capacity to cope with the world and can use my abilities to satisfy my needs.

I believe that my needs are seldom going to be met if I have to depend on others.

I feel deeply and passionately about life, myself and others yet at times I find it difficult to get these feelings across to others.

At times I find it hard to feel loved, perhaps because I have not created that love within myself.

I create a split between myself and others through my judgments.

I create a split within myself through my preoccupation with the ideal self.

Self as instrument model, the teacher is the teaching, process is the content, who I am speaks so loud they can't hear what I'm saying.

Awareness is movement.

If there is a block, illuminate it; if there is process, facilitate it.

I am impressed with experience which seeks expression.

What is not expressed is depressed, creating an imbalance in my energy flow.

I believe that the answer lies within, and is understood through intimate sharing with another, being personal.

We need to strengthen our being in order be more fully who we are through our doing.

The following statements about personal relating serve as a touchstone for the initial steps in the present research.

- Human beings have a need to establish close personal relations.
- Being personal involves a set of learned skills which include establishing rapport, resolving conflict and developing intimacy.
- The expression of being personal is an act of self-disclosure which requires varying degrees of risk, trust and love.
- Being personal can occur at an intellectual, emotional or physical level.
- People construct conceptual maps or models of the world which are used to guide behavior. Each person maintains a relationship paradigm which is the sum of his/her

beliefs, attitudes, values and assumptions about human relating framed in a context of personal history. These constructs operate primarily at an unconscious level.

- Awareness of self and other is the precondition to understanding. The ability to detach, dissociate and/or self-reflect is important in the generation of alternative behavioral possibilities. Choice is possible when alternatives are more clearly understood in context.
- Being personal is not more valued than impersonal superficial relating. Context and appropriateness combined with desired outcome dictate the nature of the relating chosen.

APPENDIX 5

Self-Reflective Journal - Researcher Observing Process

The following journal excerpts represent a sample of the ongoing self-reflective process which I employed throughout the data-gathering stage of the research.

11/8/86 7am
Last night was the beginning of the seminar which centered around the question, "What is real?" Various points of view were forwarded by participants as to what was real. There was the idea that one's perception and ongoing experience constituted one aspect of reality. Furthermore we agreed that reality had something to do with consensual perception and experiencing. If for instance we all agreed that someone could drop through the floor then perhaps that would be possible. More simplistic was my example of my parents' television which changes color and sound through an evening of viewing. My parents' consensual reality of the television is that it is fine since they have adjusted their perceptions in such a way that they don't notice the flicking color and sound. Psychic healing, physics and yogic practices were suggested as other examples of small pockets of consensual realities which are exclusive to its members. Although the discussion was short, the focus was set. This program is designed to question the very basis of our intellectual and conceptual world-view. This perspective parallels the nature of my study which will provide a pragmatic example to work on throughout the program.
12/8 7 am
The selection of co-researchers was both an interesting and educational experience. I opened the invitation to the entire group the first night and then suggested a meeting today to determine interest. Nine people showed out of the eighteen seminar participants, all five of the men and four women. I handed out the five page description and opened the floor for questions. Five women and three men have committed to the project.
I found the process of inviting and trying to explain what I wanted and expected to be useful in clarifying my own thinking. I said that I wanted people to find a question that would provide a focus, motivation for their

involvement. Think of a question you would like to have answered over the 26 days in relation to the topic of being single. I also asked each person to use a journal to record their experiences of interactions with people during new horizons. The inevitable questions around how often and how much do we have to write elicited feelings of being the teacher. I shared this perception and explained that I wanted people to write enough so that at the end of the program the journal writings would be representative of their experience of being personal. I stressed the necessity of the co-researcher to be someone who is a co-participant seeking out the meaning in the project which is of interest to him/her. Personally motivated interest will sustain curiosity and involvement more readily than obligation. So it appears that the frame with which I have presented to the co-researchers will definitely influence the results of this investigation. The manner in which this influence manifests is in my judgment consistent with the process and content of the study. The willingness to be open will provide an invitation to explore their own experience of being open.

13/8 7 am

Today was my first interview (M). Upon entering the interview I was unsure and somewhat confused about how to use the interview sessions. With tape-recorder in hand I proceeded to focus on his experience of being personal through a somewhat clinical questioning stance. He felt uncomfortable and he reported a similar feeling of akwardness. It was through the sharing of our individual experiencing in the moment that allowed us to be more personal. When we are experiencing thoughts and feelings which we don't share with the other person then the possibility of being present is diminished. In other words our internal experiencing may be so overpowering that we find it difficult to focus our attention externally. As Ben described, in the lecture on ego, superego and id, it is through bringing forward these various aspects of our personality and expressing (sharing) them to another that one creates the possiblity for intimacy and closeness with another. With M this was shown through his pre-judgments of me, which once expressed cleared the air for him to see me as I am, rather than as the pre-projected images. In terms of being personal, risking to share his judgments is also a statement of trust and commitment. The meta message is I want to be in contact with you and my objectification of you is getting in the way. As long as we objectify people through our judgments we really don't have to contact them personally. Objectification is both impersonal and distancing.

What is surfacing as a pre-set for me is that each person derives their own meaning of what it is like to be personal. In turn when you and I meet, our separate paradigms of relating meet as well and in turn monitor, dictate, and evaluate our individual behaviors. M said, to be really personal meant to be emotional, expressing a core sadness. So when I didn't express a lot of affect in the begining of our discussion he felt I wasn't being personal. For me being personal means being open to share what my thoughts are in present experiencing. And since I wasn't experiencing a lot of emotion I didn't express it. This was interpreted as being closed. My assessment of our initial interaction was that we were being open because we were sharing our present experiencing. So you see the different frames we bring to our relating indeed dictate the results. How similar this sounds to the bias of scientific researchers in proving or confirming what they already know rather than exploring new possibilities.

The Summary of Method - The design is emerging as I am more in contact with the co-researchers and the other curious seminar participants. The questions which they are posing are useful in clarifying what I am doing and how I am doing it. This is perhaps an important aspect or result of being personal. That is that as we open and disclose ourselves to others we more clearly see who we are through our interactions.

The research is designed to engage 8 co-researchers in an exploration of their experience of being personal. Each person is being asked to clarify and understand their unique paradigm of relating. The interviews serve as an opportunity to discover how we experience each other and ourselves when our separate paradigms meet. To understand more fully who we are separately and in our interface. At this point I imagine that each interview will take on its own unique characteristics and "personality".

14/8 7 am

How different yesterday's interview with D was from my talk with M. I felt a certain uneasiness, as if she were looking to me for direction or initiation, which resulted in information-giving rather than sharing. A question and answer interaction ensued to which I expressed a certain discomfort and one-sidedness and to which she stated a preference. She openly stated what was going on for her, that she felt more comfortable helping and giving than receiving. So in terms of being personal I feel I was being open and disclosing about my ideas about the research project of which she was inquiring. Perhaps my expectation of the intimacy which was present in my

interactions with M are influencing my being with D. To just be with
her, to accept and respond to who she is, was my agenda. I am aware that we were in rapport and at the same time there was an ackwardness, a lack of flow in our conversation. Although we have been in another workshop together, it is through our relationship with a mutual friend that has created warm and close feelings towards her. At the same time I am interested in the fact that these feelings have not evolved out of our past interactions with each other but rather through another person. So when we come together I realize how little I have talked with her beyond the maintenance of our good-will which has often come in the form of banter or off-the-cuff one-liners. So it appears that context is an important factor in being personal. What are my reasons, motivations, interests and expectations for being personal with another? D and I have maintained a comfortable distance through our joking around and so when we come together in these different circumstances new rules apply. And so we must learn to find ways of relating that serve us both in terms of our prospective wants and needs. She shared her interest in exploring her relationship with her son yet was reluctant to offer more information as a means of engaging with me. My asking for more information was often met with additional generalized responses. So what appears to be occurring here is not an unwillingness to relate but rather a "need" to control the nature of the depth and breath of the sharing. The issue of trust surfaces here as an issue related to the level to which one is going to self-disclose. Timing is also a factor as is their personal and our shared history.

As a co-researcher D was seeking more information about what was acceptable for her to be doing in the journal. I judged that she was using the interview time to gather more information about the project. This also served as a way of not disclosing of herself by deflecting and in fact controlling the conversation through questions. Psuedo communication, shifting the interpersonal risk on to the other thru questions. This is consistent with what she has described as her ease with the helper/giver stance and her difficulty with the discloser/receiver position. I find it interesting how the skills of communication can so readily become ways of hiding while at the same time giving the illusion of being personal. Someone is missing in the exchange, and the other is left not knowing who they have missed.

My overall impression of this interview is one of control and distance. Rapport was developed and maintained which in turn gives rise to the issue of control and power. How willing am I to be influenced by you?

15/8 7 AM
My meeting with DA proved to be primarily an intellectual exchange. We exchanged ideas about our experience of being personal, conceptualizing and proposing ideal ways of interacting. I would say that we were in rapport, stimulated and interested in each other's ideas and at the same time somehow not revealing of our emotional selves, at least not through language. Non-verbally, we flowed much more readily than the stop/start interaction I had with D. Energy level was high to the point of near excitement. He began by exchanging his perceptions of me, yet in a manner that was strangely distant. Although the words communicated something personal the manner of delivery seemed detached. I don't know what I'm getting at, other than how each person through their unique way of being personal leaves an impression which is somehow difficult to explain. The meaning of one's communication is in the response that it elicits. Although our intentions are in the spirit of good will, the way we transmit them greatly affects the response. Additionally the world-view of the other is perhaps as if not more significant in the meaning making process. As DA talks perhaps it is the meaning I am making from the words, gestures, facial expressions, changes in tone and tempo of speech which determines what impressions I am left with from our interaction. The thoughts, feelings and body responses which I experience during and after, in other words my lived experience of DA are what dictated my judgments about him. It is from the interpretation of my perceptions of him that I create a representation of the experience of DA. It follows that this representation then becomes the lens through which I experience this person. A rigid or fixed lens limits while an open and changeable lens frees me to experience this person in a variety of ways. Judgments are an example of how lenses are fixed. Sharing judgments frees the consticted perspective (the fixed image) and allows me to see more of who is there. Objectification distances as object and subject split. Relativity unites.
It is through being aware of how our subjective responses influence our perceptions of our relations with others which provides the possibility for closer contact.
16/8
The group last night started off slowly with each person presenting their views and impressions of being personal. It was a beginning. People were in my opinion checking out the group which in some ways elicits the issue of trust and willingness to risk. The difficulty people experience in being personal and the differences in their expectations of self and others are fascinating.
17/8

Yesterday there were no interviews.

18/8

My meeting with A introduced me to a different aspect of being personal. The excitement which was a part of our meeting was perhaps due to the willingness to meet on unknown ground. The fear and excitement metaphor is perhaps an appropriate way of explaining what happened. Again judgments surfaced initially as a means of clearing the way for us to be present. This act of clearing seems to free up energy which has been used to conceal or hide one's impressions of the other. In terms of time and topic the relevance and immediacy of our interaction also seemed to add to the level of engagement. In terms of rapport, tone tempo, volume, gestures, body posture, all seemed to dance together.

19/8

Monday was a day off.

20/8

G suggested that for him the issues of self-hate and despair were currently blocking his expression of being personal. His feelings of disillusionment with the futility of sharing with another, of being in relationship or of helping another person set the tone of our conversation. His fear that other people couldn't be interested or open to him because of his own lack of self-acceptance. How he stops himself from being personal raises a number of issues around the constructs of inclusion / exclusion , control / letting go and openness / closeness.

C, through her willingness to share a very emotional part of herself, started me questioning the importance of words in being personal. I realized how much I have focused on the clarity of expression through the use of language to evaluate the level of being personal. Yet in this meeting the level of being personal was very much beyond the words themselves. We in essence move the sharing of experience which precedes its linguistic representations. The emotinal exchange was both deeply moving and personally revealing. The impact of the non-verbal aspects of being personal is becoming more clear. With each person, the act of being personal has occurred on many levels. Perhaps our bodies have already said more than we can ever fully express in words. Could it be that the words are just a means of acknowledging what the body is continuously revealing. And that the degree to which the verbal and non-verbal messages are consistent will ensure the level of trust and comfort others will experience. Much of self-disclosure then is just a matter of reporting on your concious awareness of what you have unconsciously said through your body.

26/8

During the last four days without any direct contact with the co-researchers, a number of issues have surfaced. First, the level of commitment as was evident at the last group meeting is beginning to wane. As I found out, two people had not yet written in their journals and two others had written little. This is significant in terms of the initial excitement and romance about their relationship to the project and to meeting other people and the subsequent loss of energy. The resistance/fear of getting to know people has been replaced by the power struggle/the fear of being influenced or controlled. The honeymoon is over. A second issue which is relevent to relationships on the whole is the willingness to put time into the relationship. If we don't spend time sharing, clearing and learning about each other (being personal) then how can we become more intimate and knowing with each other? As the program has proceeded many other pulls have been provided to distract people from the being personal focus. At this point the relationship to the project is starting to take on the nature of an obligation. Even for myself I had considered cancelling the last set of interviews in order to have time to practise some of the body work and accupuncture techniques. Without the constant input of my energy the process would not continue. Even though the co-researchers were encouraged to establish their own objectives and curiosities to pursue during the course of the program, motivation and commitment have surfaced as major issues.

M is an example of the above phenomenon. Late, distracted, not present and preoccupied are words which might describe his arrival for the session. Our discussion started with his description of how he stays impersonal with his live-in girlfriend and the nature of their ways of not dealing with the conflicts in their relationship. This proceeded to his needing to behave like a little boy, to play around and stand on his head. He said that the feeling of not expressing himself, of holding back who he is in his relationships, is sad and troublesome for him. He talked about how it was easy to be interested in people whom he saw as one up from him but once he became equal he backed off. The charge of the conquest, the path of glory is both full of charge and challenge. But once the other has been won over, then what? The potential of being personal is frightening for him because he says he doesn't know how; he doesn't have any role models. So the pattern with his girlfriend becomes one of withdrawal or fighting so that the conquest can begin again. This pattern is also expressed through their sexuality: a withdrawal and contact cycle. There is something about their isolation from each other which is profoundly disturbing. Their seeming lack of intimate personal contact with each other is both curious and saddening.

J. The possibility of wholeness is how J frames the act of being personal. It is through the expressing of the self in relationship with another that the whole person is experienced. It means being willing to recognize the ways in which we ignore, dismiss, discount and avoid dealing with others. Through this recognition we are more able to accept and own the projected aspects of ourselves. In the religious context he gives the example of the mother of the molested child hating God and how he encouraged her to fully express the hate as a means of becoming more personal with God. He talked about how politeness and forgiveness are ways of not acknowledging what has happened. It is a way of not being responsible for our actions or feelings. The choice to engage is contingent upon our motivations and is always in the context of investment versus effort. To react against or to move towards is enhancing and energy producing whereas indifference is blocking the flow. The act of acknowledging that people were enemies put life into the relationship and set the context for the possibility for passionate interaction, whereas indifference isolates. The significance of boundaries in being personal is a recognition that if I don't define myself to share then I operate from a place of role and maintain an impersonal stance.

27/8 7am

S. The second session with S was very good in terms of data collection. I believe that much was covered through our discussion, yet so much went on for me directly after the meeting that I can hardly remember what she said. Best to listen to the tape again.

Group session #3 was useful in terms of looking at distance which is created by roles, judgments and objectification. I used the session to do three guided images of inclusion, control and openness. Not much seems to be available to write about so I am going to stop.

APPENDIX 6

Information Handout and Consent Form

BEING PERSONAL - A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Introduction to the Study

I propose to investigate the relationship paradigm (intellectual, emotional and behavioral assumptions) of some of the participants of a 26 day residential training program - New Horizons: The Conceptual Self.
I want to engage with these "co-researchers" to develop an understanding of their lived-experience of "being personal". It is an invitation to openly express their subjective experience of relationships through journal writing, small group discussions and individual interviews. This research project provides a co-creative context for those involved to learn more about their interpersonal relationships.

> Why is it so much fun to toss a ball, a beanbag, a breakfast roll, or a Frisbee ... or to catch one tossed to you? Playing catch must be one of the dullest activities two people can share, yet it is always curiously satisfying. The exercise of skill is part of it. But surely it has to do with connection, with a relationship suspended in midair until something is caught and for a moment held. (Unknown)

It is the connection, the relationship suspended in midair, and more specifically, the "something" which is caught and for a moment held that delimits the essential focus of this study. This research proposes to examine the process of interpersonal relating by developing an understanding of each individual's relationship paradigm.

Research Procedure

In this research specific methods have been designed to direct the attention of the co-researchers toward their subjective lived-experience of being personal. These methods assist the co-researchers to assume a reflective point of view from which to observe their experiencing of interpersonal interactions. Descriptions of experiences will be gathered in the form of journal writing and recorded individual and group interviews. This method of data collection will occur concurrently with an ongoing self-reflective process employed by the primary researcher.

Self-reflective descriptions can be enriched by posing specific questions to oneself while writing in the journal. The following questions are clearly emerging as a way of focusing on what happens between people in the process of relating, which I am calling being personal. These questions serve as a starting point. As we proceed, new ideas will emerge from our individual and co-relational experience to provide alternative perspectives from which to view ourselves.

"What is it like to be personal?

"What thoughts, feelings and body responses do you experience when you are being personal?"

"How is being personal different from being impersonal?"

"What is it like to be in rapport with another person?"

"What is it like to be in conflict with another person?"

"What is it like to be open and intimate with another?"

1. The Initial Question

In beginning to examine your relationship paradigm it will be of use to outline the ideas you hold about being personal. The questions listed above can serve as a guide for you in defining the basic assumptions, beliefs and expectations which underlie your interpersonal relations. It is also suggested that each co-researcher pose a question which is of interest re: being personal. This question can be used to focus you on what it means for you to be personal.

2. The Journal

The journal is an opportunity to adopt a self-reflective perspective on your personal interactions each day of the program. It is suggested that your writing include specific descriptive examples of your experiences of relationship with others. It is proposed that you will initiate entries from your own perspective using the following guidelines to stimulate your thoughts and feelings of your daily experience.

> Reflect on an example of a time during the day when you were in rapport, in conflict and/or open/intimate with someone. Tell anything you can about the situation, about what you felt, thought, did or said. Try to give a full description of your experience of your interaction with this other person. (What emotions were present? How did your body feel? How were you present for the experience? How were others present to you? What were/are your thoughts of the experience? What was it like to be with someone in this way?)

During the first week you are asked to begin writing in your journal by responding to "The Initial Question" mentioned above. Thereafter journal entries can be made in order to describe your experiences of being personal.

3. The Interview

An initial group interview will be held with the co-researchers during the first three days of the program in order to explain and delimit the research topic, the method and their participation in it . In addition this interview will begin a process of relating which will serve as an example of one of the varied contexts of relating that the co-researcher will experience over the 26-day program.

Two individual interviews will be used to explore the relationship paradigm of each co-researcher.

4. The Group Sessions

Group discussions will be held once a week to provide an opportunity to share varied experiences and perceptions of the experience of being personal. During one of these sessions participants will be asked to engage in a guided imagery of their experience of being personal. A guided imagery procedure will be used to assist each person in developing a full sensory representation of the experience. Co-researchers will be asked to write out their experience immediately following the imagery experience.

4. The Final Questions

- Outline briefly the ideas you held about being personal before entering the New Horizons program.
- In what ways have these ideas been confirmed or challenged by the ideas presented so far?
- Describe which ideas have most affected you in terms of your thoughts, feelings and behaviors on being personal.
- Imagine an experience of yourself being fully personal. What would the experience be like? What would you see, feel and do?

Consent Form

I consent to being a participant in the above study about the experience of being personal.

I understand that my participation in this research is completely voluntary and that I may decide to withdraw at any time in the research process.

I also understand that I will have access to the data in the form of transcripts and audio-tapes if I so wish.

I further understand that my paricipation in this study will be kept confidential, any names or other identifying information will be changed and a pseudonym of my choice will be used in the research findings.

Signed ____________________________